

The sharpshooter



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Incorporating 18th, 21st & 23rd Bns (Sharpshooters) Imperial Yeomanry, 3rd County of London (Sharpshooters) Imperial Yeomanry,
3rd County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters), 23rd London Armoured Car Company (Sharpshooters), 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters),
3rd/4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters), The Kent and County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters), The Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry.
www.ksymuseum.org.uk



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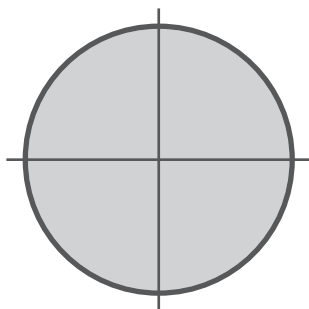
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Changes to the Association

In last year's journal, I filled a lot of space explaining the proposed adoption of a new Trust Deed. I'm delighted to inform you that the new Trust Deed is in place and that the *Association* has now adopted the name of *Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association* which duly recognises the Kent side of the family and more accurately describes our Association.

Essentially, the three parts of the *Association* have moved ever closer during the past two years and, in reality, undergone significant change and modernisation. The adoption of the new Trust Deed has brought together key figures from the 265 Sqn / Bexleyheath / Kent Yeomanry side of the family with those from C Sqn / Croydon / RAC side and the old central *Association* regarded as the preserve of the WW2 veterans and their families into one single group of Trustees acting on behalf of the entire Sharpshooter family.

Aside of the name change, outwardly not very much may appear to have changed. However, on the inside, there is now a solid group of eager Trustees representing all aspects of the *Sharpshooters* family and I'm extremely enthusiastic about how we are pushing forward to improve all aspects of the *Association's* activities.

We are now in a much better place to support our serving *Sharpshooters* in the two serving squadrons as part of their bigger regimental / corps associations, as well as continuing to serve the older *Sharpshooters* and the KSY Museum Trust too.

I'd like to thank all those that have shared the journey. It's not always been the smoothest, and, in reality we are past a major milestone and there may be more turbulence to get through yet before we are securely where we want the *Association* to be.

Our Trustees are Colonel Paul Acda DL TD, John Gunn, Major Mark Hodson TD, Mark Kentfield, Bill Lovell, Lt Col Simon Malik TD, Penny O'Hare, Andy O'Hare, Tim Rayson, and we are supported by a number of additional committee members, Terry Bodman, Dave Hewer, Tony Jewell, Steve Shelley and Dave Whitehouse. My thanks to all the Trustees and Committee Members for their commitment and hard work for the cause.

During the process a small number of people have stepped down from committee positions and I would like to express my thanks to them for their faithful support over the years and their continuing support to the *Association* as a whole.

The transition within the *Association* that has taken place is not the first transition that we have had to make: in rather different circumstances, back in the summer of 1944, both the 3rd and 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) were so badly depleted due to the volume of fighting they had undertaken, they merged to become the 3/4 County of London Yeomanry at Carpique airfield on 31st July. Unlike the context within which we operate, the regiments were given four clear days to complete the amalgamation, define operating procedures and bring all the technical and cultural aspects of two armoured fighting units together. Perhaps unsurprisingly, their four days were cut short by two days as the new regiment was moved from XXX Corps to VIII Corps and put at four hours notice-to-move for operations. Despite this, and the inevitable loose ends and unfinished business that resulted, the new regiment operated extremely successfully and carried forward the great ethos embedded in the *Sharpshooter* regiments.

Whilst the scenarios are not the same, there are some similarities. The process is never easy, although as long as the aim is clear and everyone keeps holding to it, then success will prevail. As Andrew Graham, the historian who wrote “Sharpshooters at War” reflected on the 1944 scenario, “*Now that it is possible to look back and see the period in perspective ... in almost all cases they made a very good job of it*”. I hope that in the months and years to come, similar conclusions will be drawn about the way that the Association continues to develop.

What is the Association doing?

There are several ongoing work strands the outputs from which should start to go public in early 2013; these include *Association* governance, membership types and membership cards, fund-raising and communications. In addition, there are several ongoing activities that are more immediately visible and include Support to Operations (S2O), Welfare and the website.

The website has undergone much change during the year and the latest version has been hailed as a great success. If you haven't visited it, do take a look at www.ksya.org.uk and the links to twitter, facebook and YouTube. If you have felt, like many, that these “social” websites are to be avoided, then let me encourage to take a look at the Sharpshooter pages if nothing else. There's some great content, current news and photos, and slowly the site and its links are improving our communications across the board – in terms of currency and reach.

The S2O and welfare provisions continue unabated, albeit that there have been few Sharpshooters on ops during 2012 (mostly on post tour leave). Penny O'Hare, who leads our welfare support and S2O was duly rewarded for all her efforts when she was invited to have lunch at an event with HM the Queen during the summer and enjoyed sitting next to HRH Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh for the duration of the event.

During 2013 it looks as though there will be two soldiers from C (Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry) Squadron, Royal Yeomanry and two soldiers from 265 (Kent & County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters)) Squadron, 71 Signals Regiment heading off to Afghanistan for an operational tour, Op HERRICK 18, between (approximately) March and October. As ever, your support will be much appreciated

for the soldiers and their friends and families while they are away. If you would like to write to the soldiers whilst they are away please contact the *Association* and we can pass on their addresses.

We have enjoyed some successes fund-raising both directly (ie asking for donations!) as well as through merchandise sales (wines etc). Our costs, whilst not high, are always a source of some anxiety for the Trustees as we meet the costs of providing wreaths at funerals, supporting the serving squadrons and producing the annual journal which is so valued by all our members.

Affiliation with the Worshipful Company of Insurers

The relationship with our affiliated livery company, the Worshipful Company of Insurers, continues to deepen. The affiliation was started by Alan Grant and is an important relationship for the Company, the serving Squadrons and the *Association*.

In March 2012, we were fortunate that the then Master, Tim Ablett, and the Master's wife, were able to join C (KSY) Sqn RY during the Royal Yeomanry's Welcome Home and Freedom Parade in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

During the year the Master and Company have very kindly donated funds to the C (KSY) Sqn and also to the Association to help our S2O. We are enormously grateful to the Company for their generous support.

Looking ahead

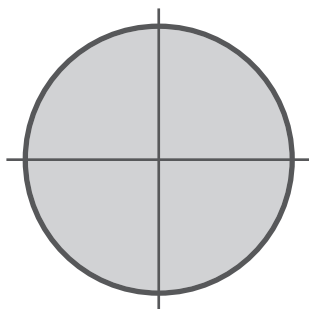
I wish you an enjoyable read with this edition of the *Sharpshooters'* annual journal produced for its new production deadline early in the new year. As you will see, the Sharpshooter family continues in good heart. Please do visit the website and perhaps add your own photos or comments to facebook or twitter or YouTube. And, if you can spare a few pounds, please do make a donation, however small or large, using the Gift Aid form that is included on the flyer or which can be downloaded from the website.

Very best wishes for a happy, successful and healthy 2013.

Yours aye

Mark Hodson TD

Major | Chairman, Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association



THE SECRETARY'S BLOG

2011/2012

The Secretary's report covers a longer period than usual because of the decision to delay publishing the Journal from October to January. The new *Association* Management Committee decided that a January publication date would reduce the stress on the editorial team because to achieve a September publication we needed to have input by the end of July and these were invariably late due to summer holidays etc. It also meant that the dates for the forthcoming year could not be predicted with any great accuracy and given that everyone works it was just too much. That being said extracting articles remains like drawing hens teeth and this edition was no different from it's predecessors!!

So looking back to the last 16 months to November 2011 we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Bir El Gubi. To mark that occasion a special service of Remembrance and thanksgiving was held in the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace followed by lunch in Mess of Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms which is also located in the Palace. The El Gubi dinner was for 2011 – and also for 2012 – changed to a luncheon to make it more accessible for our WW2 Veterans. We were very honoured to be able to welcome both Phillip Moore and Clifford Pace to the service and lunch together with Lt Colonel Ben Tottenham who commanded the KCLY in 1963 when the guidon was presented by HRH Princess Alexandra. Other notable guests were the new Honorary Colonel, CO Royal Yeomanry and a wide variety of other guests and as you will see we had a very nice letter from Mr David Cameron – writing not as Prime Minister but as someone related to the Sharpshooter family – and a very warm response from Her Majesty to the message of loyal greetings as well. The service and indeed the lunch were a perfect day for everyone who was able to attend although tinged with sadness with the death the previous week of Bobby Bramall MM whose obituary appears under 'Empty Saddles'.

These events went off extremely well although the Secretary was exhausted at the end of it all and were followed by an Extraordinary Meeting of the SYA held at the Union Jack Club. At that meeting it was agreed that the name of the *Association* should change to *Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association* a new Trust Deed was signed and new trustees appointed. It was also agreed that the new *Association* should not have any branches and that as a consequence services such as welfare and Support to Operations (S2O) would be centralised.

It is important to recognise that although these branches have marched off their sterling work in inculcating young *Kent Yeomen*, *Sharpshooters* and subsequently *Kent*

and Sharpshooter Yeomen with the Sharpshooter ethos over many years will always be remembered with appreciation. The work of such stalwart members like Robin Ludlow, Leon LeBesque, Neville Gillman MC, Alan Grant OBE, Eric Cornish, Peter Blake and David Hannam to name but a few have laid the very sound foundations that the *Association* rests on today and which will continue to serve in the future.

This process continues with the *KSYA* continuing to receive a warm welcome from both the serving squadrons at their respective TAC. In particular there is a Croydon St Georges Day dinner and the *KSYA* is invited to attend the Sqn Ladies Night where the Peter Blake decanter is presented – this year it went to SSgt Phil Skidmore and his wife Lorraine who are the administrative hub of the Sqn. It is fully expected that there will be more both Bexleyheath and Croydon centric events and where the dates are known they are shown in the FOE.

This crucial bit about the name change means that we now reflect the amalgamation of 1961 and subsequent events including the creation of two squadron entities and this very firmly ties the *Association* with those serving squadrons. One very clear manifestation of the new name is the new *Association* banner – appropriately guidon shaped – and which shows through the cap badges on it how has developed and where it sits today. All of this means that we are relevant to the younger soldiers who join the squadrons and – hopefully - they will become active members of the *Association* as they leave. However for those of you who have said ‘I do not go to events because no one will know/remember me’ I say you should go! There will always be a warm welcome



and there will always be at least one person who you will know there even if it is me! As an example Jim Ward organised a get together via Facebook at the end of January 2013 and 12 people attended for several beers and to reminisce over old times – the 80's! Quite a few had not seen each other since those heady times of big Germany exercises but they are now all linked in together and hopefully they'll come to other events as well.

The banner was purchased by the Hon Secretary and the cost was supported by the following members of the Association :

Guy Farage, Mark Hodson, Terry Bodman, David Hannam, Boris Mollo, Paul Acda, Dave Whitehouse, Robin Ludlow, the former KCLY Bexleyheath branch courtesy of Tony Jewell. This means that the banner has been purchased by the members via public subscription which given our lack of funds is only right thus allowing us to focus spending on S2O and welfare. If you wish to contribute to the cost of the banner then please feel free to send the Hon Sec a cheque – payable to him.

The year 2012 was as we all know a memorable one for HM The Queen as her Diamond Jubilee was celebrated and her 'performance' at the Olympic Games was remarkable. The *Association* got stuck into reorganising itself following the AGM/SGM the previous November and has continued to make progress towards the unified organisation that it aspires and needs to be for the future. A lot of work remains to be done and the Committee and Trustees will continue to press on with the work in the coming year but the underlying principle that remains is that the *Association* will continue to be funded voluntarily and that a compulsory subscription will not be raised.

In terms of events because of the impact of both the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics it was decided not to resurrect the visit to Italy – cost was a significant factor



as well at circa £900pp. However the *Association* still attended Cavalry Sunday in mid May where our cadets helped propel those unable to march around the course, the Federation of London OCA Parade in early June where our route took us past the protesters in Finsbury Square and, of course the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey – see separate reports.

The year culminated in the 2012 El Gubi lunch and service which took place on the 16th November. We were again very fortunate to be able to have a service in St James's Palace which this year was held in The Queens Chapel rather than The Chapel Royal with lunch afterwards at The Civil Service Club. As this year was the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Alam Halfa it was decided to have an Alam Halfa focus for the service and so the address was about the road from El Gubi to Alam Halfa. An account of the day written by Dan Taylor is in this journal.



As you all know the trip to Italy to commemorate the Italian campaign failed to get off the ground mainly due to costs in a recession year. Unfortunately that looks to be the position for 2013 and at around £900pp it really was expensive for many then and likely to remain so. Following the last meeting of the *KSYA Committee* in September 2012 it was decided that the *Association* main effort for a trip will be 2014 for Villers Bocage and work is underway to start that off. The date has already been identified which **12th – 15th June 2014 and we are engaged with Leger tours who have looked after us before.** There are encouraging signs that the newly invigorated *Westminster Dragoons Association* are very keen to join in with us and of course 2014 will see the 100th anniversary of the start of the Great War and there will doubtless be events for that.

The 2011 Journal which was sent to 500 members (and this edition will go to a similar number) contained an appeal for funds inside the back cover and I'm delighted to be able to say that donations received from the 41 members including some of our WW2 veterans totalled some £1,625.00 including a very generous donation of £750 from

Bobby Bramall's family together with the gift of his medals. A list is shown at the back of this journal.

And you will see from the Treasurers report for 2011/12 that although the *Association* was in the black it was only due to those donations received so again thanks to all of you who donated as a one off or indeed those who have set up a standing order. ***But we really need more – actually all - of you to voluntarily subscribe to enable us to continue what we need to do which includes publication of this Journal. If all of the recipients of the Journal who presently do not donate – about 400 - did so with a £10 standing order that was gift aided we would be able to produce the journal on a continuing basis without worrying if there were sufficient funds to do so.***

The *Association* also continues to look at other ways of raising revenue and has available Sharpshooter Red and White wines available for a minimum donation of £7.00 per bottle and it is not just for Christmas – see the advert elsewhere and it is very drinkable and has raised so far circa £350 which will be gift aided as well. The *Association* also agreed to help the Croydon Sqn to purchase wristbands which are available for just £2.00 each from the Secretary. Both of these initiatives combined with a regular Standing Order from some and our income help us to keep in the black. We must also acknowledge a very generous donation for S2O of £500 from the Worshipful Company of Insurers that will mean that those *Sharpshooters* on deployment in 2013 will receive welfare parcels on a regular basis loaded with the goodies that make operations bearable.

The year 2013 has some fixed events in it and these are shown on the Forecast of Events for the year. As we grow more reliant on electronic methods of communication I would encourage you all too look at the new *Association* web site (www.ksya.org.uk) and at our Facebook site (*The Sharpshooters*) as well which is where events and news get posted. As I am sure you are all aware the cost of postage is eye wateringly expensive hence we can only really afford to send out an annual journal and the drive is to do as much as possible on line. If you have an email address – or indeed have a relative or friend that is willing to act as your electronic post box – then please let us have it. However I do realise that many of you are not connected and many also prefer to get the Journal in hard copy and so we will continue to produce one at the best price/quality that we can achieve – ***if you have not donated please consider doing so now.***



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 November 2011

Dear Aja Hall,

Thank you very much for contacting me through your Honorary Colonel, The Rt Hon Nicholas Soames MP, regarding the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Bir El Gubi service and luncheon, and kindly inviting me to send a message. It gives me great pleasure in being able to do so, particularly because of my own family's strong links with this battle.

It is fitting that your service is taking place this week, only a matter of days since the whole country stood in silence in remembrance of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. November is an important time for our country to reflect on the sacrifices of those who have died in the service of their country. It is a time when we show our gratitude to all those who bravely fought for our freedom and for the lives we enjoy today.

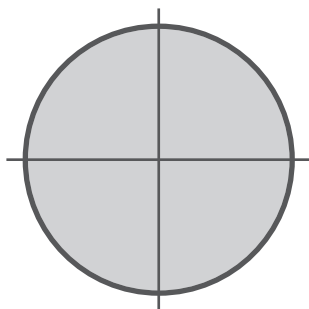
Past and present service personnel make an extraordinary contribution to British life and I highly value the professionalism and dedication they display. I am particularly pleased to pay tribute to the veterans of the Battle of Bir El Gubi where the 3rd/4th County of London Yeomanry served with such distinction and with whom I have a family connection through my Great Uncle, Lt Col Sandy Cameron.

We must never - and will never - forget the valour and sacrifices that have been made by so many during the two World Wars and later conflicts. It is a sad reminder that anniversaries such as the 70th of the Battle of Bir El Gubi will probably be the last for some and I hope that the church service in the Chapel Royal and the reception lunch will give you an opportunity to remember comrades and pay tribute to absent friends.

I am very sorry that I am not able to attend the service or reception, but please pass on my, and Samantha's very best wishes to all veterans of this historical battle.

Major T D Howell

Yours sincerely
David Cameron



HON TREASURER'S REPORT

Whilst the accounts for the Charity are on the *KSYA* website for those not connected the following is an executive summary of them.

As at 31st March 2012 net assets were £46k. However, using the market valuation of investments net assets were £59k. These investments and donations generated an income of £5.3k in the year of which £3.3k was spent on the annual magazine whilst allowances were given to *Sharpshooters* in need amounting to £1,086.

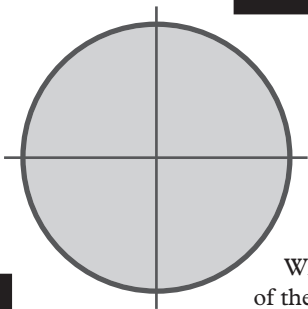
The 2011 Journal which was sent to over 500 members (and this edition will go to a similar number) contained an appeal for funds inside the back cover and I'm delighted to be able to say that donations in the year were received from 41 members up to the end of the 2011/12 FY and totalled some £1,625.00 including a very generous donation of £750 from Bobby Bramall's family together with the gift of his medals. These donations were supported by a number of new standing orders which will give us a regular income stream as well.

As you will gather from the extract from my full report, although the *Association* was in the black it was only due to those donations received so again thank's to all of you who donated and also those who have set up a standing order at the same time. Whilst donations continue to trickle in I have no hesitation in saying that if you have not donated we need you to and preferably on a regular basis by standing order or you can do it on line as well if you wish!

The stock market remains volatile and as a charity we have to have a cautious investment policy. This means that whilst our income is secure through ChariFund Bonds it is low and needs to be boosted so that we can continue to produce this journal and support our veterans, serving soldiers and families. In 2012/13 we received a very generous donation of £500 from the Worshipful Company of Insurers for our support to operations work for which we are extremely grateful.

The *Association* also continues to look at other ways of raising revenue and has available Sharpshooter Red and White wines available for a minimum donation of £7.00 per bottle and it is not just for Christmas – see the advert elsewhere and it is very drinkable. As of January 2013 this initiative – which has to be nicest way of donating money – has raised some £400 for use by the *Association* for S2O and welfare. The *Association* also agreed to help the Croydon Sqn to purchase wristbands which are available for just £2.00 each from the Secretary. Both of these initiatives combined with a regular Standing Order from some and our income help us to keep in the black. ***But we really need more of you to voluntarily subscribe to enable us to do what we need to.***

Finally one request I must ask is for you all to keep an eye open for *Sharpshooters* in need. Although our funds are limited there is scope to make small donations or put people in contact with other Service Charities.



EMPTY SADDLES 2011/12

Where possible and if requested by the family, members of the Association try to attend funerals with the banner if appropriate.

3rd CLY

Jack Geddes (Joined 3rd CLY, transferred to 4th when raised and then 3rd/4th)

4th CLY

Bobby Bramall MM

Geoff Vokes

3rd/4th CLY

Ralph Snook

Geoff Gardner

Kent Yeomanry

Don Kennedy

KCLY

Pat O'Connor

RY C(KCLY) Sqn

John Jones

71st (Yeomanry) Sig Regt

Colin Brown



Capt (QM) Patrick O'Connor
30th May 1921 – 2nd January 2012

Pat O'Connor died at the age of 90 in January 2012. He was a member of the *Kent Yeomanry* throughout WWII and then from the re-formation of the Territorial Army (TA) in the *Kent Yeomanry* and then *Kent and County of London Yeomanry*.

During the rising tension of the late 1930s Pat joined the *Kent Yeomanry* in April 1939. The *Kent Yeomanry* was then a *Royal Artillery (RA)* Field Regiment equipped with the 18/25 pounder (pdr) field gun, an 18 pdr gun carriage with reworked 25 pdr barrel as the 25 pdr howitzer was still being developed. On the 1st of September the TA was called out to drill halls before war was declared on the 3rd. The KY Regiment, 97th (*Kent Yeomanry*) Field Regiment RA, was immediately prepared to deploy with the BEF to France. Much to the dismay of Pat and one other gunner, this was to be without them as it had been decided that only TA soldiers over 19 would go to France. Instead he was assigned to the *Kent Yeomanry* second line regiment, 143rd (KY) Fd Regt RA, then being formed from reservists.

Between then and Dunkirk, 143rd was brought to full strength and trained for war with Pat becoming a driver/wireless operator. After Dunkirk there were only two fully equipped 25 pdr field regiments in the south of England. With the threat of invasion 143rd was deployed as a “flying column” to patrol the coast between the Thames and Portland, each night going into a “hide” where regimental signs were changed to give any German spies the impression that we had more artillery regiments than we did!

In 1940 the British occupied Iceland and 143rd went there as part of 49th Division, which became known as the “Polar Bear” Division (Div). Pat was in Iceland for 18 months before the regiment came back to Pontypridd in South Wales to prepare for D-

Day. In early 1943 Pat met Ethel after being asked by one of her friends to move a piano! They married in December setting out on what was to be 68 years of marriage with three children, Terry, Patricia and Kereen coming along after the War.

On D+7 *49th Div* landed in Normandy and was involved in the hard fought battles around Caen, Falaise and Le Havre. Pat was deployed with the artillery forward observation team up front with the infantry. After the advance into Belgium Pat was taken seriously ill with acute appendicitis and after operations in Brussels was casevaced by air back home. He was medically downgraded for the remainder of the war but was deployed as a guard commander of German prisoners of war. He was finally demobilised in July 1946 after nearly seven years on active service.

He did not forget his *TA* and wartime comrades and experiences so when the *TA* reformed he rejoined the *Kent Yeomanry* progressing to become a Battery Sergeant Major, then RQMS and finally being commissioned as a Lieutenant Quartermaster in what had become the *Kent and County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters)*. At the amalgamation as RQMS he spent many hours producing the new cap badge for the Officers to wear on the amalgamation parade, the real ones not yet having been received. He did this by soldering the White Horse of Kent collar dog onto the *CLY* cap badge! Along with all the “old and bold” he left the *TA* as a Captain (QM) in 1967 when the *TAVR* was formed.

In civilian life Pat was a Customs & Excise officer for 33 years retiring in 1981 and moving from Orpington to Liss in Hampshire for 30 years of retirement although he did work for a short while as barman in the Liss *British Legion*. *Requiescat in Pace*.





Brigadier (Ret'd) Colin Brown

Brigadier (Ret'd) Colin Brown, ex CO 71st Yeomanry Signal Regiment died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on 19th August 2012, aged 74. Darling husband of Heather, adored father, father-in-law and son-in-law to Paul, James, Tania, Victoria and Norry and devoted grandad to Zak, Luciana, Alex and Isabella. Thanksgiving Service was held on Friday 7th September 2012 at St. Nicholas Church, Sevenoaks, Kent.

I, amongst a number of current RSA Brighton Branch members, had the dual privilege and pleasure of being both a soldier under his command in the 1980s plus, later, a member during the years of his excellent and most supportive branch Presidency.

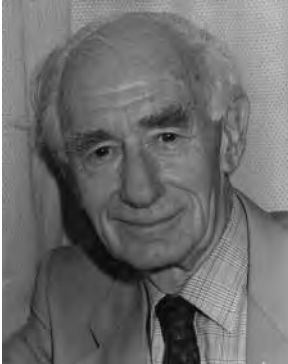
His extraordinary blend of personal characteristics and skills made him a wholly natural leader who inspired all those around him. He engendered a great mix of respect and admiration with his warm, engaging, yet totally professional personality. He was, at least for me, one of those rare people whose exhortations “to be the best” were communicated constantly, effectively yet almost always without the need for words.

Our most profound regrets and warmest sympathies go to Heather, Paul, James and the family. Whilst full tributes will properly appear in the national and Corps press, everyone that I know will remember Brigadier Colin as an exemplary officer, gentleman and Corps professional as well as the sincerest of friends for whom one could wish.

Maj (TOT) John Barber TD
Royal Signals (V) (Retd)

Captain G R (Bobby) Bramall MM

Bobby Bramall who died on 16th November 2011 was awarded an immediate Military Medal for his action during the Battle of Villers Bocage. He was commissioned in the field and subsequently became a stalwart member of the *Association* in the post war years.



Bobby's citation reads as follows:

'On June 13th 1944 at Villers Bocage, this NCO was in command of a Firefly sited to shoot across the main street in which three MkVI German tanks were trapped. From his position he could see the leading enemy tank reflected in a plate glass window just around the corner from him. He lined up his gun to shoot through the corner of the building, but, owing to a loss of velocity through the building the round failed to penetrate. Profiting by the example the Mk VI started to shoot away the corner of the building. It had fired several rounds and was well on the way to collapsing the building when Sgt Bramall hit upon the idea of putting another round through the hole which his first round had made. The only way to do this was to unload the gun and bore sight on the hole. This he did and a hit was registered that damaged the mantlet of the Mk VI and caused it to pull up the street some yards. To think this problem out and put his decision into action with the noise, dust and, debris caused by fire from the Mk VI at only 30 yards range showed great coolness and determination to defeat the enemy.

This Mk VI later attempted a dash down the street and Sgt Bramall scored a hit which caused a 'brew up'. The second Mk VI went to his gun the same manner about an hour later.

Sgt Bramall's handling of this important position enabled a further five tanks to be destroyed as well as the two accounted for and made it possible for the Town to be held throughout that day. This in its turn made possible the consolidation of the Tracey Bocage feature which was then held for a further 24 hours.

The holding of the Town prevented the juncture of 2nd Panzer Div and Panzer Lehr Div for a whole day whilst the Tracey Bocage feature remained as a threat to the 2nd Panzer Div and rear of Panzer Lehr for a further 24hrs.'

Bobby received a field commission and ended the war as a Captain. In October 1948 he was appointed as one of the two joint secretaries of the *Association* at the AGM – the other being Captain Nichols. Joint secretaries were required in the early years to help the members of the former two regiments find their way in the amalgamated regiment. He was also for many years a stalwart member of Wargrave Parish Council and a founding member of their Parish newsletter.

We are most grateful that Bobby's family have gifted his medals to the Museum Trust where they are presently on display at Croydon but will move to Hever in time for the new season. The medals were accompanied by a very generous donation of £750 to the welfare fund for use on S20 and welfare matters.



Geoffrey Vokes

Geoffrey Vokes born and brought up in Islington, north London, joined the Sharpshooters in 1936 along with his two older brothers Bob and Bill. They joined as a result of a walking holiday in Germany where they had been shocked into realisation that war was inevitable. Geoff was invalided out of active service early in WWII, but maintained his connection with and admiration for the Sharpshooters throughout his long life. After the war he was involved as the honorary secretary and was viewed as a lynchpin of the association.

He ran the family business as a diamond merchant in Hatton Garden, until his retirement at 65, nearly 30 years ago. He cared for his wife Joan through her final years, and was delighted and surprised to get remarried to Joy at the age of 80.

Geoff was always interested in everything, very active in the golf club, painted prolifically in oils and played a mean game of bridge even at 94. He was an old fashioned 'gentleman' and will be greatly missed by his second wife Joy, his three sons, Peter, Jim and Philip, his daughter in law Gill, five grandchildren and six great grandchildren and by all of his many friends and extended family.





Jack Geddes (second left) and crew.

Jack Geddes

My father Jack Geddes, died peacefully last night, 8th December 2012. He had been unwell over the last few days so my mother, Olga, sister Inez, wife Caroline and I had been spending a great deal of time with him in his final hours.

What was so touching is that the staff at the retirement home were calling in on him to say good bye, as they seemed to love him. All knew he was dying. To them he was no trouble, never complained, used to recite poetry and took life as it came. All the same he got up to some funny antics, so they had hilarious storeys to tell about him.

After Dad had died, we were struck by a great sadness and then by relief that he went so peacefully. He was 93 years of age so lived a full life.

Dad can now only be bound for a happier place, because as you know he had Alzheimer's disease during the last eight years of his life, which seriously affected him.

In one way we were so lucky because Dad had been a good husband to my mother and was great father to my sister and me, so we will always remember him with a smile. He also inspired us to do things, in my case to follow him into law.

Dad had made many lifelong friends in the Regiment. Initially the 3 CLY and later when it was divided into two regiments, the 4CLY where he served until they were re-amalgamated at Carpiquet Aerodrome.

He told me of the times when death was so close and comrades lost.

One of those occasions where he was extremely lucky, was as a gunner on a Sherman Firefly, called "Alexander" in A Squadron, just after the battle of Villers Bocage when, it was knocked out by a Tiger Tank.

This occurred during their advance through a corn field not far from Caen when German panzers suddenly counterattacked through a smoke screen that had been laid down.

Dad had got off a shot at the German tank, at about the same time as it saw his tank, but Dad's shot missed. The German tank didn't miss, its armour piercing round entering the turret just above my father's head.

He told me of his then bailing out, but then realising that the tank commander Sergeant 'Bert' Lancashire had not got out, so under fire had climbed back onto the tank and then assisted him out of the tank. Whilst Dad was doing so the other crewman, Ronnie Asher, the wireless operator and Alf Pitcher, the driver also came to assist. In that short interval the Firefly according to Dad was hit two more times by armour piercing rounds.

When they had the commander off the back of the tank, 'Tiger' Cotton seeing that they were in trouble had roared up in his tank beside them, so that they could transfer the wounded commander to 'Tiger' Cotton's tank then withdraw from the action.

Like his story, I sure that there were so many other stories, of those that are left from that time and those now serving.

It was the regimental friends, like Roy Brooks after the war, who had become a real estate agent and who supported my father in those critical days when Dad began to practice as a solicitor in his own law firm in East London.

It was some years later, before Dad decided to return to Australia, where he had spent his childhood and where we have all lived since.

In Australia, Dad was called to the New South Wales Bar where he practiced as a barrister for many years. He was well liked and highly regarded.

He was remarkably successful in trials appearing for plaintiffs in industrial accident cases where juries were involved. He was able to establish an affinity with the juries. He told me that his secret was that he imagined when speaking to a jury, that he was again, a gunner mechanic Class I and so related to them at that level.

I remember an occasion when he was appearing in matrimonial case, for a wife who was seeking to divorce her husband on the ground of his drunkenness, in those days a ground for divorce. This had been denied by the husband's lawyers. The case was adjourned for lunch. Not long afterwards, Dad was accosted outside the court by the husband (an old Australian digger) who had got drunk during lunch.

The husband shouted at Dad, "Where were you when I was fighting at Tobruk?" The husband was left dumbstruck when my father loudly retorted back: "I was trying to get you out – haven't you heard of the 7th Armoured Division!" It's funny how life turns out!

So Dad had a full life.

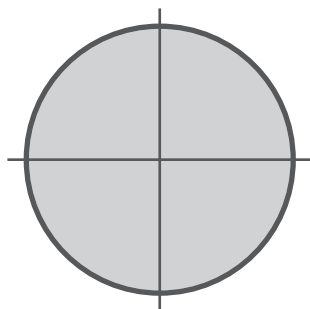
Tim, a personal thank you for although knowing of my father's condition, taking the time and trouble to visit him last year.

Thank you also to the other members of the Regiment for their support and correspondence over the years.

I know it was greatly appreciated by Dad.

Sincerely and with the greatest of thanks from our family!

Justin Geddes



2012 HAS BEEN A YEAR OF ACTIVITY AND TRANSFORMATION FOR C (KSY) SQN RY

We began the year with a full ceremonial weekend of freedom parades. Saturday saw five squadrons and the RY band marching with weapons down High Street Kensington followed by a CVRT detachment of Spartan and Sultan. Sunday saw a similar affair in Hammersmith and Fulham, both parades ended in the respective town halls with speeches and hearty refreshments. The Squadron was trained to a decent standard in weapons drill by instructors from the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment and we acquitted ourselves well. Overall the weekend was quite a spectacle.



April saw a Sqn Adventurous training expedition to the national white water centre in Snowdonia. The trip included canyoning (sliding down waterfalls) and rafting the grade 4 rapids on the Tryweryn created by opening the sluice gate below the dam of a disused nuclear power station! Splitting into teams of 6-8 person rafts each with its own instructor we each had three runs down the river being taken down progressively more difficult paths before all four teams lined up for a race at the end. It was never going to be a clean fight and on the way down several members of the Sqn took it upon themselves to launch suicide attacks by leaping on to their opponent's rafts. It was a long cold wet day and a new experience for most, SQMS's Skidmore and Underwood and Cpl Sinnerton grilled whole side of beef in a 12x12 tent that night in order to fortify the troops for an ascent of Mount Snowdon the next day. On Sunday morning despite a severe weather warning we started from Pen y Pass. With driving wind and a bit of rain we took the less used Southern route past Llyn Teryn as it afforded some cover from the wind. However as we climbed back up onto the main route the weather turned as hit us with 60mph winds and driving hail as well as limited visibility. From then on the conditions worsened – forcing a safety decision to abort the summit attempt! A very

wet battered C Sqn returned to Pen y Pass and recovered back to the TAC. Overall an extremely enjoyable and challenging weekend.



Shooting Team

2012 saw C Sqn take the lead for the Royal Yeomanry in the field of operational shooting. The Team attended three competitions: the national TA skill at arms meeting, the TA operational pistol shooting competition and the London District Operational Shooting Competition (Londist OSC). In addition the Sqn led the regimental hosting of the Londist OSC, which for the first time included regular and TA units alike. The overall effort from the team throughout the year was significant with six practice weekends in addition to the three competitions and all usual duties. Captain Webb was instrumental as RCO throughout the build up and Cpl Moden put in an impressive performance as team captain (so much that he was promoted to full Cpl in the field by Major General Norton, GOC Londist last December).

Cpl Moden describes the Londist OSC from the sharp end: “In December, C (KSY) Sqn took the lead in the regimental effort to support the London District Operational Shooting Competition. This included fielding the RY team, and testing our marksmanship prowess against all units (regular and reserve) in London District. Building on our experience of the TA OSC in July, we were already familiar with the three matches we would shoot. In preparation the team worked very hard. We fired in the prone up to 500 metres at ever smaller targets, practiced firing from various positions at 100-200 metres, and dashing down range over obstacles to beat the butts. The team’s first shoot at the competition was the march and shoot, we were the first team to finish the march on time and set the bar with the highest score of the first day – a good start! The Team Combat Snap Match aka ‘beat the butts’ was next. Charlie fire team were fast crossing the obstacles but despite a valiant and furious effort were beaten by a persistent target that wouldn’t go down and sadly were unable to clear the butts. Delta fire team were however successful and secured valuable points for the overall team score. The last shoot, the Defence Assessment was a match we are all familiar with. However the team must have all put on lead boots by mistake that morning, as the 100 metre dash was slow going. However despite all agreeing it wasn’t their best performance, the team managed to score enough points to come 5th overall out of 12 teams. Not bad for our first season. 1st and 2nd place were taken by 106 RA and 151 Transport Rgt RLC, both well known in the shooting fraternity and teams we’d seen perform well at the national TA Skill at Arms Meeting in July. It was notable that only one regular team finished in the top five! The RY team were; Charlie fire team

LCpl Moden (IC) and Tpr's Brewer, Brady and Mill, Delta fire team LCpl Thomson (2ic) and Tpr's Garner, Knight and Hall (*sharpshooters* all). The team thoroughly enjoyed the competition and sufficiently impressed RHQ that we have been tasked to enter all three shooting competitions again in 2013, a challenge we shall very much look forward to."

Moving Forward

Annual camp was a fragmented but useful trade training camp in Lulworth and Bovington with a large number of people qualifying in GMPG, Bowman and CVRT command. The real excitement came in the autumn with the confirmation of the new light cavalry role and the issue of a range of new equipment, MAN trucks, MTP uniforms replaced DPM and best of all R-WMIK Landrovers with mounted GPMG and HMG.



"Light Cavalry role is to provide a strategically deployable light reconnaissance capability which is employable across a wide range of operations from Peace Support Operations through to stabilisation interventions, to enabling roles in major combat operations"

The new equipment brings a huge training bill for the troops, with over 22 days training to be a driver (no less than five different qualifications needed), 12 days for gunnery, 14 days for bowman signals and a further two weeks for commanding. However the opportunity is exciting enough for the majority of the Sqn to happily sign up to back to back courses for the start of the year. Going forward the recruiting challenge for the sub-unit remains huge, we have managed to step up retention and turnout to deliver 35+ however that number needs to double in the next 18 months. The new light cavalry role and equipment is delivering a significant upturn in new joiners and transfers from other TA units. In addition the re-structuring of the regular army has seen a small surge in highly qualified ex-regular's joining up.

Exercise Autumn Rising

The end of October saw an Augmented C Sqn deploy to SPTA with three full sabre troops in the dismounted role within a counter insurgency Ops scenario (the first C Sqn R-WMIK made a static appearance only due to lack of qualified crew). Brilliantly organised by Captain Ruck-Keene (using his recent experiences as a troop leader on Op Herrick) the Squadron hit the ground running and dropped in to a high tempo tactical environment as soon as we were dismounted from the transport. The troops were based in a FOB and tested with a relentless programme of unpredictable recce and combat tasks, they returned home exhausted but elated via a cooked breakfast at the OC's house.



Personnel Changes

The year saw the retirement of Captain Jim Davies as PSAO, he was dined out in style at White's club and is greatly missed. His highly capable replacement Captain Benny Harris joined us from the HCR and continues Jim's great work. WO2 Shardlow moved to HQ Sqn as SSM and WO2 Tomlin take over. Captain Webb moved to RHQ as MTO, he was replaced briefly by Capt Paul Sparrow from HQ Sqn whose employment took him overseas. Capt Dominic Ruck-Keene joined C Sqn as Trg Officer from the QDG in 2011 and subsequently stepped up as 2ic. Capt Sean McMullen joined us from HCR

as Trg Officer, 2Lt Julian Moore joined fresh from Sandhurst. SSgt Underwood returned to HQ Sqn and Sgt Mason took over as SQMS.

Promotions

Both Lt Critien's were promoted to Captain, Sgt Barnard to SSgt, LCpl Honeysett and Moden to Cpl and Tpr Brewer to LCpl.

Operations

LCpl Grais re-mobilised for his second tour in Afghanistan and as such was C (KSY) Sqn RY's nomination for volunteer reservist of the year, in include the citation below:



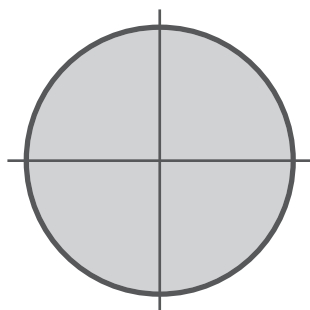
"LCpl Jason Grais volunteered for Op Herrick 14 in September 2010, he was mobilised in December 2010 and was attached to 3 Rifles. LCpl Grais excelled in the tough pre-deployment training package which is no mean feat in a challenging light infantry role. However after this positive start, due to changes in force generation and manning, he found himself sidelined in Germany, waiting as a battle casualty replacement for several months. During this extended holding period he was often isolated and it took considerable strength of character to maintain his personal morale during the long wait. (He had after all made considerable sacrifices to give up his job and leave his friends and family in order to

go on operations). After six months waiting LCpl Grais was finally deployed to Afghanistan as a Section 2ic, he served the final six weeks of his battle group's tour with distinction through considerable personal danger in the dismounted combat infantry role. LCpl Grais was finally de-mobilised in December 2011, however three months later in March 2012 he volunteered to deploy again on Operation Herrick 18. Neither the frustration of the very long wait or the danger which he encountered once finally deployed were able to dent his formidable resolve."

The last word, view From the SSM

First parade on drill nights moved to 1930hrs in April 12, this has been talked about for years but never done. Eight months on it has been a great success with an average attendance on Drill Nights of 30 soldiers on parade. Transition to the new role has brought its logistical challenges, the green fleet through 2012 was reduced to just a few vehicles and more reliance was placed on white fleet. The old trustworthy Bedford trucks were finally cast and have been replaced by new MAN trucks.





265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY (SHARPSHOOTERS)) SUPPORT SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

71st (CITY OF LONDON) YEOMANRY SIGNAL REGIMENT

TA Centre, Watling Street, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7QQ
Training night: Tuesday 8pm – 10pm

OC: Maj Keith Wrate

2IC: Capt Paul Ukpai; PSAO: Capt Steve Slaney; Log Sp Tp Cmdr: Lt Kush Cooper

SSM: WO2 Adrian Keeble; SPSI: SSgt Carl Shackleton; SQMS: SSgt Paul Thwaite

We finished last year with the excellent news that the Squadron had been awarded the Freedom of the Borough of Bexley. The parade itself took place on the middle weekend of Annual Camp which itself was UK Ops based over the SE of England – London, Longmoor and the like – and part of the long preparation programme to put the Regiment in top form for the Olympics the following year. It has been a year when the ‘green’ side of things has been put on the back burner whilst Comms, Log Support and driver and trade training have been put to the fore.

October saw the first in a series of weekends to conduct special to arm training that would see us through to March 2012. SSgts Daz Lane and Cynthia Jackson took the lead with driving with Cpls Harries and Castro looking after our Comms assets – BOWMAN and REEBOK which would be tested during the Games. We also received out complement of the new MAN trucks to transport our SCP and associated equipment and all our Driver Electricians needed familiarisation.

November, as usual, saw our reunion function well attended by nearly 70 friends and the opportunity to reprise the events of a couple of months before by marching through Bexleyheath, although sadly without the band this time. It was also the month when two of our soldiers started pre deployment training for OP HERRICK, Cpl Sutton for his third operational tour and our Padre Captain Mark Speeks.

The beginning of the Training Year saw MATTS weekends introduced as soldiers were also given the opportunity to undertake their military tests as well as the all important support for the Olympics. These were run by both Squadron and Regiment and gave our instructors the opportunity to demonstrate their skills as well as the Troops to pass the tests. The second of these was set in Lydd and gave us the opportunity to catch up with a former Sharpshooter, Cpl Graham French, who now works there with the MGS.



Handover of command – Andy Church to Keith Wrate.



Members of the sqn on MATT's weekend.

On 1st April 2012 Major Andy Church handed over Command of the Squadron to Major Keith Wrate, an event which was marked later that month by a splendid lunch at the House of Commons with the Honorary Colonel. The Squadron is pretty well known to Keith, having commanded 265 Signal Squadron some six years previously before moving on to the Royal Wessex Yeomanry and Staff Officer posts in 43 (Wessex) Brigade and 2 (Inf) Brigade, the latter where he was responsible for the development of young and potential TA Officers.

Whilst many aspects are familiar, he is now getting to grips with the REME LAD, commanded by Captain Michael (Spud) Murphy and Medical Section commanded by Captain Sean Wardle as well as the intricacies of a fully functional support role for the Regiment.

June and July saw members of the Sqn start deployment on one of the biggest UK operations for years in the form of OP OLYMPIC. SSgt Lane, Cpl Broadbent, Cpl Butler, Cpl Castro, Cpl Harries, Cpl Larney and Cfn Johnson chose the full three month deployment while other members of the Sqn were mobilised for a number of two week periods in a variety of roles.

Preparation for OP OLYMPIC had started way back early in 2011. Key players were trained up with Regimental Ops procedures and policies, operators fully trained up on Radio, REEBOK and driver training qualifications. The training programme had brought all Operators, Chefs, Medics, Clerks and Mechanics up to speed and fully competent in their respective trades. Driver training had given most of the TA a higher licence qualification with familiarisation including MAN SV, PENMAN and civilian mini bus and Combi Van. The majority of the mobilised personnel stayed at Bexleyheath and manned NETCEN 71 and key detachments, However Pte Markham went off with the VSF, Cpl Harries with 2PWRR and Cpl Butler with the REEBOK detachment at Hainault. The preparation of sites was vital and all PSAOs and SQMSs under the keen eye of the QM (Capt) "Olly" McGrail set about attending G4 LONDIST meetings and collating stores, equipment and establishing contracts in preparation of receiving the troops. Bexleyheath site had 22 Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) personnel, 18 RAF Air warfare personnel and three Chefs assigned. Added to that total included another 50 personnel from this Regiment and 32, 37 and 38 Signal Regiments respectively, which included NRPS, Regulars and TA. The opening day of the games saw the Regiment on standby for contingency, and true to form the REEBOK detachment had to be deployed to the LMOC. This worked accordingly to plan and the detachment led by Cpl "Caz" Castro provided an excellent first rate service.

This was tough work with long shifts but, as we all know now, everything went off very well with the help of the Armed Forces in general. We even managed to secure some tickets for the opening ceremony dress rehearsal.

It wasn't all work, we also had its fair share of visits. In June, the Corps Colonel, Col Graham Norton and, during the first week of the Olympic Games, the Regiment received a special visit by the DCLF, Major General, the Duke of Westminster KG,CB,OBE,TD,DL. Both of whom were shown around the full capability on the site at Bexleyheath and introduced to the serving soldiers.

Work didn't stop for those not directly involved in the Olympics, there were still Squadron training weekends and a lot of community engagement and fundraising for



OC Maj Keith Wrate leads the sqn out of the TAC on the Remembrance Parade.



LCpl Crane (Soldier of the Year), Sig Simpson Tradesman of the Year, Pte Hirst Best Female soldier of the year & Cpl Porter SSM's soldier of the year.



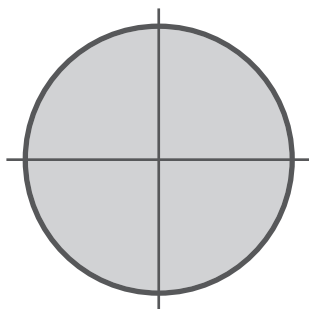
OC Maj Keith Wrate leads the sqn out of the TAC on the Remembrance Parade.

the Regiment's chosen charities – Help for Heroes and Hounds for Heroes. At Welling United Football Club and the Julian Hitch Martial Art Schools of Excellence we participated in events which raised over £17,000 for Help for Heroes and in July the Squadron undertook its own 'sportathon' an 18 hour training event at the local supermarket which raised over £5,000 for Hounds for Heroes. We also put in a strong team for the London District GOC Challenge Cup competing in basketball, football, squash, relay and Tug of War. We won the Tug of War!

It is now back to a more recognisable battle rhythm. We have a combination of infantry – based and communication weekends set out for the remainder of the year. The first of these was back in October when we deployed to the familiar terrain of CPTA near Folkestone and re visited our patrolling skills around a number of stands – it rained constantly and it was agreed all round that it was about time we started more infantry training.

Sadly, in the past couple of months, we have also said farewell to two long serving members of the Squadron, both of whom have over 25 years' service. Sgt Kev Harding (REME) and SSgt Cynthia Jackson have both hung up their boots and we wish them both well in their civilian careers.

We have now received the first of our consultation papers for FR20. The Green Paper is out and Troops are being briefed on its contents and proposals. There are a number of changes proposed and potential challenges ahead as we look at further integration with our Regular counterparts and I am sure that as a Squadron we will respond to these in a positive way.



Orbat – November 2012

265 (Kent & County of London Yeomanry Sharpshooters) Support Squadron (Volunteers)

71st (City of London) Yeomanry Signal Regiment (Volunteers)

Squadron Headquarters

Major Keith Wrate
Capt Paul Ukpai
WO2 Adrian Keeble

Logistic Troop

Lt K Cooper
SSgt Griffiths
SSgt Lane
Sgt Bontoft
Sgt Woo
Sgt Wise
Cpl Myers
Cpl Castro
Cpl Harries
Cpl Sutton
Cpl Butler
Cpl Porter
Cpl Broadbent
LCpl Moore
LCpl Crane
LCpl Swaffield
LCpl Liscoe
Sig Brasier
Sig Roberts
Sig Evans
Sig Prior
Sig Simpson
Sig Harrild

Sig Henderson
Sig Prior
Sig Sutton
Sig Irwin
Sig Wilsher
Pte Hirst

Medic Sect

Capt Wardle
SSgt Eastley
LCpl Turner
Pte Markham

LAD

Capt Murphy
Sgt Carpenter
Sgt Hursey
Sgt Pearce
Cpl Brand
Cpl Green
Cpl Larney
LCpl Burgess
LCpl Handley
LCpl Horan
LCpl McRoberts
Cfn Augustine-Ryan
Cfn Johnson
Pte Ness

Permanent Staff

Capt S Slaney PSAO
 SSgt P Thwaite SQMS
 SSgt C Shackleton PSI
 Sgt Shorthouse LAD (Armourer)
 Sgt Jennings PSI (T)
 Sgt J Morse
 Miss B Simmons (AO)

RHQ Troop

Lt Col Sutherland (CO) (R)
 Maj Rowson (2IC) (V)
 Maj Brown (Ops Maj) (R)
 Maj Swanson (Regt Admin Off) (NRPS)
 Maj Mitchell (QM) (R)
 Capt Ward (ToT) (V)
 Capt Mallett (Adj) (R)
 Capt MaCaulay (Ops O)
 Capt Corrigan (Ops O) (V)
 Capt Pryke (Regt Ops Sp Off) (NRPS)
 Capt Speeks (Padre) (V)
 WOI Graham (RSM) (V)

WOI Healey (Sen Vol WO) (V)
 WO1 Gittins (Yeo of Sigs) (V)
 WO2 Constable (Yeo of Sigs) (R)
 WO2 Ferguson (Ops WO)
 WO2 Ford (Regt Admin WO) (NRPS)
 WO2 Scobie (RQMS) (V)
 WO2 Shuttleworth (RQMS) (NRPS)
 WO2 Escritt (MTWO) (NRPS)
 WO2 Twose (ROSWO) (V)
 WO2 Springer (MTWO) (V)
 WO2 Lewis (Foreman of Sigs) (V)
 SSgt Marshall (Trg PSI) (NRPS)
 SSgt Nicholls (Info Sp Engr) (R)
 SSgt Savarese (Chief Clerk) (V)
 SSgt Savchenko (Foreman of Sigs) (R)
 Sgt Davenport (Clerk) (V)
 Sgt Lonergan (AGC) (V)
 Sgt Wallbridge (Electrician Driver) NRPS
 Cpl Way (AGC) (V)
 LCpl Smith (CO Dvr) (R)
 (V) Volunteer (R) Regular

C (Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry) Squadron

The Royal Yeomanry

Squadron Headquarters

Maj Howell
 Capt Ruck-Keene
 Capt Sparrow
 WO2 (SSM) Tomlin
 Sgt Bristow
 LCpl Francis
 Tpr Garner
 Tpr Gear
 Tpr Pollock

1st Troop

Lt A. Critien
 Cpl Honeysett
 LCpl MacNeill
 LCpl Grais
 Tpr Thorp
 Tpr Brady
 Tpr Ullah

2nd Troop

2Lt Moore
 Sgt Faytaren
 LCpl Smith 532
 LCpl Banwat
 Tpr Brewer
 Tpr Hall
 Tpr Mill
 Tpr Vance
 Tpr Gurung

3rd Troop

S/Sgt Barnard
 Cpl O'Hare
 LCpl Moden
 Tpr Eley
 Tpr Poppmacher
 Tpr Salazar
 Tpr Menys

Tpr Williams
Tpr Windless
Tpr Knight

Squadron Recruit Training Troop

Sgt Meadows
Cpl Stallard
Cpl Paine
LCpl Thomson

Recruits under Training

Tpr Paine
Tpr Denton
Tpr Marsh
Tpr Wright

Admin Troop

Sgt Mason
Cpl Paine

RHQ The Royal Yeomanry

Maj McNemeny 2ic
Capt Webb, MTO
WO2 Chadwick RQMS Tech

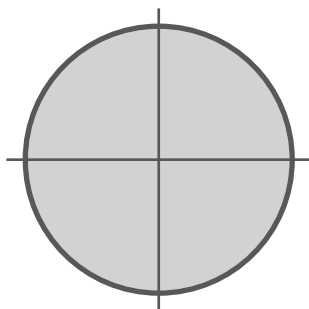
Officers & NCOs at ERE

Maj Field OC London University OTC
Lt G.Critien London University OTC

Permanent Staff

Capt Harris PSAO
SSgt Skidmore QPSI
SSgt Porter RDG
CoH Goodwin HCR
Mrs Skidmore AO





ROYAL RUSSELL SCHOOL CCF – A DIAMOND YEAR



Royal Russell CCF Yeomen of the Guard

The year started fairly slowly but we all knew that the Diamond Jubilee would impact the year but none were really sure by how much! As the year progressed so did our training and we laid plans for our usual exercises and received a warning order that we might participate in the Diamond Jubilee River pageant. At the same time we again decided to operate a Germany based exercise – called *Diamond Leopard 12* and also decided to invite cadets from the ACF to participate as we had in 2011.

There were quite a few issues to solve in getting the exercise organised and to set out clearly the standards required of the cadets who aspired to take part. Over shadowing this was our own normal training programme and the increasingly large burden – and uncertainty – of participation in the River Pageant. It was at this time we were invited to send a small party of cadets to support *Her Majesty's Body Guard* during the Military Muster at Windsor Castle. Apart from a challenging start the cadets had an exciting day working closely with the *Body Guard*, and seeing the full panoply of state for this unique occasion at really close quarters to The Queen.

The cadets really enjoyed taking part in the river pageant despite the awful weather and then all of a sudden it was exam time and preparation for Germany including the challenge of getting there by coach. Thankfully *Support Command* helped pull the chestnut out of the fire and off we went for a tough and demanding seven days intermixed with some R&R activities.



Royal Russell CCF Cadets and the Hon Colonel.



Royal Russell CCF Cadets at the River Pageant - before the rain started.



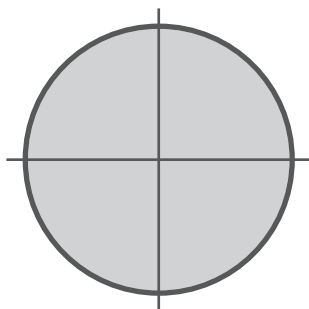
Royal Russell CCF Cadets on Cavalry Sunday.

The new academic year 2012/13 started with a bang. We had a contingent strength of 147 on our first day back of which around 80 were new recruits. We held a recruit training weekend at SMP and we held our biennial Inspection at the beginning of November to which we welcomed the Honorary Colonel – the Rt Hon Nicholas Soames MP as a guest. We supported the *KSY Association* at the Lord Mayor's show and on Remembrance Sunday we welcomed Captain Godfrey Critien who spoke at our service in the school chapel. And we have supported *Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms* at Windsor during the arrival of the Emir of Kuwait.

In February we hope to go to Whale Island and do the RN Damage Repair Instructional Unit there – the ship that sinks whilst you are in it – and we have our big FTX in March/April followed by The Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade in May where Cavalry badged cadets provide much welcomed support to veterans, the organising committee and march past as well. It has been a challenging year so far and camp will be split again UK/Germany but it will be very different as we host a group of cadets from the *Australian Army Cadets* based at the Scotch College in Melbourne on Exercise Yarra Yomp 13 in partnership with *North West London ACF*. The exercise will be based in the UK for a week followed up by a week in Germany on *Ex Leopards Leap 13*. In 2014 we hope to go to Australia as part of the exchange.



Royal Russell CCF Joint Cadet Force.



KENT AND SHARPSHOOTERS YEOMANRY MUSEUM TRUST

REPORT 2010-2012

Trustees : Guy Farage (Chairman), Anthony Jewell, Huw Jones, Chris Sutton, Boris Mollo. The Honorary Colonel, serving squadron leaders and Chairman of the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association are invited to Trust meetings but do not vote.

Hon Curator: Boris Mollo

Hon Curator (Hever) and Hon Secretary: Huw Jones

Hon Curator (Croydon): Andy O'Hare

Hon Curator (Bexleyheath): David Whitehouse

Hon Treasurer: John Gunn

The future of the Regimental Museum at Hever Castle is still under discussion with the Directors of Broadland Properties, owners of Hever Castle. The plan placed before them is for Hever to construct two associated buildings, one for the museum and one for the castle education centre. The site is in a clearing in the wooded area near to the main entrance and the idea is for the regimental museum to look like a tactical military headquarters with camouflage nets, an armoured car, a 25 Pdr gun and appropriate military signs.

Hever would own and be responsible for the buildings while the Museum Trust would be responsible for setting up the display. In 2011 we received a grant from Kent and Medway Museum Service towards the detailed planning of the display. This has now been completed by Garry Hall of H&H Design who has produced an attractive



layout, which will give us 2-3 times as much display space as we have at present. The local management at Hever Castle are very enthusiastic about this plan but have yet to convince their Directors. We live in hopes that a favourable decision may be made before too long. We will then have to go out to appeal to raise the funds to set up the display with the hope of completing it by 2015 when we commemorate the centenary of the first time the *Kent Yeomanry* and the *Sharpshooters* went into action in Gallipoli in 1915.

This year we have received a further grant from the Army Museums Ogilby Trust towards an interactive touch screen to be installed in the Restaurant/Shop area at Hever to provide an introduction to the Regiment and our Museum. This will give us experience in such installations as the new display plan includes a number of such touch screens at intervals around the display. We also hope that the Squadrons may be prepared to install similar screens in their museums where they would also have potential as a recruiting aid.

We continue to receive a steady flow of donations as listed below. Of particular note this year are the *Kent Yeomanry* uniform items of the Best family, transferred to us by York Castle Museum, which include the earliest known uniform of the regiment and an important typescript history of the 4th *County of London Yeomanry* written by Lt-Col The Viscount Cranley (later the Earl of Onslow) while a prisoner of war in Germany in 1944-45.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS 2011-2012

Kent Yeomanry

Officer's coat worn by Capt George Best, Provender Troop, *East Kent Yeomanry*, 1794

Transfer : York Museum Trust

See below

2011-6

Half Penny Condor token (unofficial copper coin) of the *East Kent Yeomanry* c1795

Purchase, ebay

2011-54

Valise, Oxonhoath Troop, *West Kent Yeomanry*, and overalls worn by Lt T Fairfax Best, *West Kent Yeomanry*, 1830

Transfer : York Museum Trust

See below

2011-6

Brass bugle by Boosey and Hawkes 1914 with regimental badge of the *West Kent Yeomanry* and inscription 'Presented to Capt R.C.Simpson'

Purchase: Chelsea Military Antiques

2011-53

Diary of Tpr S.H.Wickens, *REKMR*, 1917-18

Gift : Mr Howard Bird via the *Royal Engineers* Museum

2010-27

Medals (8) and miniatures of 2nd Lieut Mason-Springgay, *REKMR* 1914-18 and Merchant Navy, 1939-45 including two life saving medals, one French, one British

Gift : Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone

2011-52

Photographs and documents collected by Gnr Stanley Dell, *97th (Kent Yeomanry) Fd Regt RA*, Italy, 1943-45

Gift : Mrs Joan Finch

2011-12

Sharpshooters

Photographs, documents, letters (photocopies), maps and German Army badges and relics, including swastika flag and officer's map case, collected by Cpl Ian Matthews, *3CLY*, 1941-43

Gift : Mrs Ian Matthews (widow), thro their daughter Jacqueline Wiginton

2010-18



German map case 2010-21

Medals (7) of Lt Robert (Bobby) Bramall MM, *4CLY*, 1939-45

The MM was awarded for his action in Villers-Bocage 13 June 1944

Gift : Mr Gurth Bramall (son)

2012-6

Medals (group of eight) of RSM C.A. (Joe) Holway, *3CLY* 1939-45

Table presented to RSM Holway by the officers *3/4CLY* 1946

Gift : Mr Ernest Lee

2012-18



Holway Table 2012-18

A Short History of the *4th County of London Yeomanry* 1939-1944 by Lt Col The Viscount Cranley (typescript produced while a PoW in Germany 1944-45)

Purchase

2012-2

See below

'A Gardener at War', an illustrated account of the service of L/Cpl Neal, *4CLY*, 1942-45 including El Alamein and Villers-Bocage

Gift : Mrs Christine Wells (daughter)

2012-4

Typed memoir illustrated with photographs and documents relating to the service of Lieut Bill Palmer, *3CLY* KIA Primosole Bridge, Sicily, 17 July 1943

Gift : Gary Johnson (nephew)

2010-22

Memoir ('Beyond Those Last Blue Mountains'), photographs and badges collected by Tpr Jack Geddes, *4CLY* and *3/4CLY*, 1939-45

Gift : Mrs Doreen Geddes (widow)

2011-3

Three 1/35 scale models made by John Sandars, c1975

- 1 Vickers Light Tank Mk VIb 1940
- 2 Crusader Tank Mk2, 1941
- 3 Daimler Scout Car, 1941

Gift : Mr Christopher Sandars (brother)
2011-1



Sanders model 2011-1

Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry

Uniform items worn by
Major C.R.C.Aston,
17/21L, 3/4CLY, KCLY
1945-68

Including framed items,
battle dress, khaki
greatcoat, hats and belts
Gift :

Major C.R.C.Aston
2012-13 to 15

Photograph album
compiled by Sgt Tim
Rayson, 2Tp, C (KSY)
Sqn, Ex Crusader,
Germany, 1980
Gift : Tim Rayson
2011-7



Clive Aston Collection

‘Cold War Weekend Warriors’, illustrated book covering service of SQMS D Whitehouse,
265 (KCLY) Signal Squadron, c1980-90

Purchase

2011-14

The Museum is always grateful to receive donations of artefacts, uniforms, medals, documents, letters, diaries or other items related to the regiment’s history. We do our best to display a representative selection at Hever and in the squadron museums at Bexleyheath and Croydon. Original documents and photographs are preserved in the regimental archives, those of the *Kent Yeomanry* at Bexleyheath and those of the *Sharpshooters* at Croydon. These may be consulted by prior appointment (email curator@ksymuseum.org.uk or phone 01-743-270347).

The Original Uniform Worn by the Regiment

Uniform items of the Best Family (KSY:2011-5,6)

George Best of Chilston Park (between Ashford and Maistone) was commissioned into the Regiment at its formation in 1794 and joined the *Provender Troop* under Captain Sir Edward Knatchbull (Provender is an estate near Faversham). The coat therefore dates from the formation of one of the original Troops which later formed the *East Kent Yeomanry*. The button has the motto LIBERTY LOYALTY PROPERTY



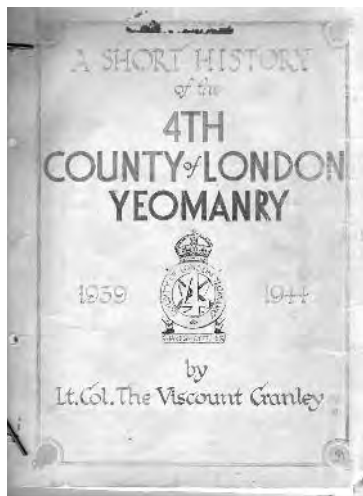
By 1799, in the print of the Mote Park Review, Best was a Captain in the *Provender Troop*, but still under Major Knatchbull. The museum already has in its collection a silver badge (KSY:1998-01), hallmarked 1797, and engraved CHILSTON TROOP CAPTAIN BEST. It would appear therefore that Captain Best tried to raise his own Troop at Chilston but was unsuccessful. Chilston Park (now a hotel) is midway between Ashford and Maidstone, on the border between East and West Kent.

The remaining two items (overalls and valise) relate to his son, T.Fairfax Best, also of Chilston Park who was commissioned in the *West Kent Yeomanry* in 1831. T.Fairfax Best is recorded in the *West Kent Yeomanry History* as becoming a Cornet in 1831 and a Captain in 1832 and is noted as being in the *Maidstone Troop*. However the valise (saddle roll) has embroidered 'WKYC' at one end and 'OHT' at the other, indicating that he was in fact serving with the *Oxonhoath Troop* (Oxon Hoath is an estate at West Peckham, between Tonbridge and Maidstone). The valise was the cavalry equivalent of the infantryman's pack, containing all his personal clothing and necessities. They are exceedingly rare and only one other Yeomanry valise is known. The overalls have a handwritten label '*T Fairfax Best / of Chilston Park / & Wurton Hick*'.



Subsequently our attention has been drawn to sketches made at York Castle Museum in 1952 which show the items described above, together with two additional items, a coatee and a forage cap both part of the uniform of T.Fairfax Best. On referral back to York Castle Museum, they have located the cap and are arranging to transfer it to us. Sadly they have so far have been unable to find the coatee although we live in hopes.

A Short History of the 4th County of London Yeomanry 1939-1944
by Lt.Col.The Viscount Cranley



This is a 26 page amended typescript with a preface signed by 'Cranley Lieut.Colonel 4th C.L.Y.' and dated 7th March 1945.

The foreword states that 'This book does not in any way pretend to be a complete history of the 4th C.L.Y. As the last Colonel of the Regiment before amalgamation with its parent unit, I have tried, with other Officers, to produce from memory a short calendar of the most important events in the life of the Regiment as our memorial to all those who died fighting so gallantly in a regiment described by a very senior officer to H.M. the King on his visit to Tripoli as the finest Armoured Regiment in North Africa.'

Inside the front cover is a list headed 'TO BE INCLUDED ON RETURN TO THE UNITED KINGDOM' with six sub headings including a 'roll of honour', 'list of awards' and a facsimile of Field Marshal Montgomery's letter to the Regiment after Villers-Bocage announcing the decision to amalgamate the 3rd and 4th CLY.

The last paragraph of the book notes that 'the foregoing pages' were compiled by the author and friends while prisoners of war in Oflag 79, Germany. The names include Major Carr (Second in Command 4CLY), Captain Rose (Adjutant), Capt Brown (2ic A Sqn 4CLY) and eight subalterns including four from A Sqn, the Squadron ambushed at Point 213 outside Villers-Bocage by the Tiger tanks of 101st SS Heavy Panzer Battalion.

In 1961, Lord Onslow (as he now was) published *Men and Sand*, which at 130 pages is a much fuller account, having access to official accounts and more of his wartime colleagues. Both are very much written from his own experience. The 1961 version was obviously written with this typescript alongside as from time to time paragraphs from the typescript are repeated, particularly at the start of some sequence of the Regiment's history.

It seems that contact with home was not entirely prohibited for a PoW. He appears to have been able to acquire a typewriter. The typescript also notes that 'The Author wrote to Lady Cranley from Oflag 79 requesting her to prepare for him the final pages, photographs, Roll of Honour, etc in order that he could complete this short history at the cessation of hostilities'.

On the last page of the typescript is a manuscript letter to 'Sandy', Lt-Col A.A.Cameron, who had been a close colleague throughout the war until he left 4CLY to take over command of 3CLY in Sicily in 1943. This letter is headed 'C' Squadron RAC OCTU Sandhurst' and is dated 6-6-45 indicating that Viscount Cranley was back on duty very soon after his release from captivity in Germany.

CONSULTATION ON FUND RAISING FOR NEW MUSEUM

The long promised new museum at Hever has reached a significant step forward, with the owners of Hever Castle having formally approved the go ahead. As soon as Hever have got planning permission, we will commence fundraising, targeting the lottery, institutions and personal donations. While the total funding required is currently in final negotiation with the designer, the order of magnitude is £200k - £250k. We will of course let you know when the Trustees are ready to push the button to launch the fund raising campaign.

In the meantime, we would welcome your ideas on how to encourage and incentivise personal donations. In common with other charities, we propose tiered recognition of donors, and “best practice” is to have four levels. As an example (and these numbers, including gift aid, are purely illustrative) we might say:

Donors £1-£500

Stewards £500-£1000

Patrons £1000 - £10000

Founders £10000+

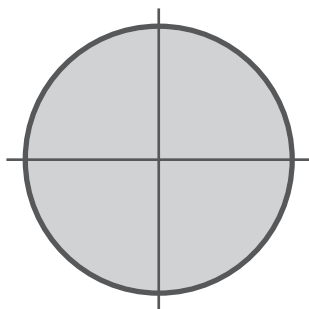
Stewards and above would get their name recorded on an honour board in the museum. Donors might be recorded in a book at the museum. We would also invite donations, at a minimum level of say £500, to be made “in memory of” a deceased member of the regiment, which we would record on the honour board.

We welcome your views of the appropriate levels, and the concept of “in memory of” donations? Please let Simon Malik and or Tim Rayson know before the end of April via email if possible.

LIST OF DONATIONS MADE TO THE MUSEUM TRUST THAT WERE USED TO ACQUIRE THE DCM GROUP OF LT R C BRYANT 3RD CLY

Tim Rayson, Jaimie Barr, Chris Sutton, Boris Mollo, David Hannam, Mark Hodson, Ben Tottenham, Robin Ludlow, Clive Aston, Robin Lawrence, Julian Radcliffe, Brenda Traylen, Phillip Moore, James Macnamara, Alex Downing, David Palmer, Ray Smith, Stuart Pritchard, Simon Malik.

The above donors pledged over £7,500 to acquire this valuable medal group for the Museum which we successfully did in auction.



WELFARE AND SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS (S20) REPORT

by Penny O'Hare

Thankfully it has been a quiet fifteen months with no new calls for assistance and all our deployed soldiers returned home safely. We had a welcome home day out in December for them where we first all went on the London Eye and then had a meal at a pub near London Bridge. It was a great day out for the men and their families.

In April I had a big surprise waiting for me when I came home from my holidays. On my doorstep an invitation was waiting for me. I was invited by the Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London to attend the South London Diamond Jubilee lunch in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh on the 15th May 2012 at St Mark's Academy in Mitcham. The lunch was for over 100 of people that do charity work and I still to this day do not know who put my name forward but I was very grateful.

I was really nervous on the day; I was chauffeured there in a new BMW Series 7 car courtesy of Des Campbell (ex Boot Trooper C Sqn). As we got closer we were following Bexley Borough's Mayor's car and so we followed it in to the entrance where we were greeted by staff and students from the Academy who showed us where to go. I entered the dining room and found my table and to my surprise I was sitting on His Royal Highness's table and even bigger surprise I was actually sitting next to him to my left. Then the nerves really hit. When Her Majesty and His Royal Highness took their places at the tables, he shook my hand and helped me to be seated. He was a gentleman. There were another seven people on the table with us so he was engaging us all in conversation. He asked me why I was there and I explained what I did for deployed *Sharpshooters*. He told me that Prince Harry was out in Afghan a few years ago, when I explained to him that Prince Harry was out there at the same time as three of our men and he was sharing the parcels with them, he laughed and said that was typical of Harry. He offered to put a box in the Palace for donations. (Watch this space!!!!!!). It was a great day once the nerves disappeared. We were all presented with a crystal cut paperweight.

In May we were able to send Mr and Mrs Williams (3rd/4th CLY in 1952/53) to The Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. They travelled up by train from Brighton and they had a really nice day – the weather was good as well which always helps!

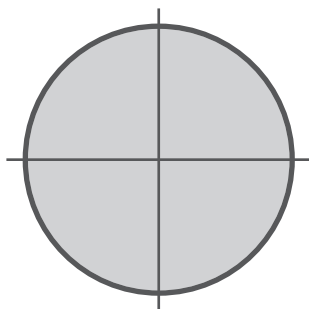
In their own words:

"Thank you to everyone who organised the day for us and getting us here. It was a brilliant day thoroughly enjoyed by both of us. Everyone made us feel welcome. We were honoured to be there."



Mr and Mrs Williams (3rd/4th CLY in 1952/53) at the The Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

Looking ahead for 2013 the numbers from C Sqn who will deploy remain uncertain. We are though very grateful to the Hon Secretary who made a successful case to the Worshipful Company of Insurers for a grant towards parcels and the families. And we would of course like to thank the Company for their support as well as all who help us – especially Mike and Jenny Shaw who arrange collections at their local Parish church.



WENT THE DAY WELL

The Lord Mayor's Show 2011 and 2012

by Terry Bodmin

2011

Went the day well, well not very well a bit of a disappointment. The story unfolds thus, by Friday 11th November all things are in place for a good day at the Lord Mayor's Show on Saturday, the outriders have the timings and the RV, the Vehicle Pass is with the Low-loader which has been all spruced up ready for the show and the lunch vouchers with the IC of the Royal Yeomanry contingent Capt P Sparrow who we will be meeting at London Wall.

I was feeling unwell and not fit enough to attend on the Saturday so I called our Hon Sec Tim Rayson to take charge for the day. At about 09.30 Saturday morning, I received a call from Capt Sparrow "where is the Low-loader" which is normally at London Wall by 07.30 "I will check and call you back." Called Ken (the Driver) "what's happened" the Low-loader had blown a rear axle in Wingham in deepest Kent and he was returning to the yard.

Called Rex Cadman provider of the Low-loader who apologised and said he will be up for it next year if required. Called Capt Sparrow "told him there will be no Low-loader this year and what had happened and thanked him for all his assistance." Called Tim (Hon Sec) and asked him to tell the outriders what was happening and disperse them to do their own thing.

Let's hope it all gets back to normal next year and thank God for Mobile Phones.

2012

After speculation that we were in for a wet and windy one, the day turned out to be just a bit dull and damp, but with spirits high and in our flasks we arrived at London Wall to find the Low-Loader in position with the M10 Achilles Tank Destroyer on the back (the Sherman Firefly is still in bits). We were part of the Royal Yeomanry contingent comprising of 2x WMIK (R) with a marching detachment of 20 with us bringing up the rear.

The Parade moved off just after 11.00 hrs with plenty of waving and cheering from the crowds lining the route, the more you waved the louder it got from the youngsters with their whistles and horns, nice to see all the families enjoying the parade. Our new *Association* Banner was on display, ably carried and lowered at the appropriate points along the route by Kevin Wright our Standard bearer.

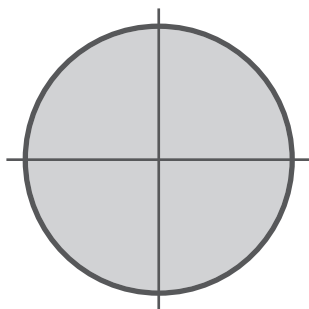
Stopping half way around the route while the new Lord Mayor gets sworn in at the Law Courts, we collect our lunch packs which contain a bottle of water, sandwich, bag of crisps and an energy bar, enough for us oldies but apparently not for the Cadet's who could have done with more, Oliver Twist springs to mind. We moved off again for the last part of the journey back to London Wall, more waving, arms aching, and debus at 15.30hrs thanking our drivers Ken and Steve for their assistance during the parade, a long day for them both, especially Ken who had a drive of ten hours to the continent the next day.

Our thanks go to Helen at the Pageantmasters office for all her help and assistance/information for the show. To the Royal Yeomanry for allowing us to join with their contingent for the Parade. Also to Rex Cadman with his continuing support each year for the Association and his War and Peace team along with the Low-loader and Tank, many thanks Rex.

Association Members on board were, Guy Farage, Boris Mollo, Mike Swan, Mick Hall, Allan Davey, Kevin Wright, Tim Rayson with his Cadet's L/Cpl Farington, Cdt M Hall, Cdt H Sams, Cdt J Watkins, Cdt B Craven, from the

Royal Russell School and Cdt Cpl Will Surridge from the Rifles.





FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

THURSDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2012

by Marian Hannam

A gloriously bright and crisp morning heralded the official opening of this year's Field of Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey by His Royal Highness Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Each November the annual Field of Remembrance is organised and run by the Royal British Legion Poppy Factory. More than 350 plots for regimental and other associations are laid out in the area between Westminster Abbey and St Margaret's Church. The Field is opened for eleven days from the Thursday preceding Remembrance Sunday to the following Sunday and the *Association* always attends the event where the joint Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry plot carries an appropriate number of crosses. The large crosses represent 50 members of either the Kent Yeomanry or Sharpshooters together with individual named crosses of those who have passed away in the year following the last publication of the *Journal*.

HRH Prince Philip, who was greeted by the Dean of Westminster, John Hall, and the Rector of St Margaret's Church, Canon Andrew Tremlett, laid a cross of remembrance in front of two wooden crosses from the graves of unknown British soldiers from both World Wars.

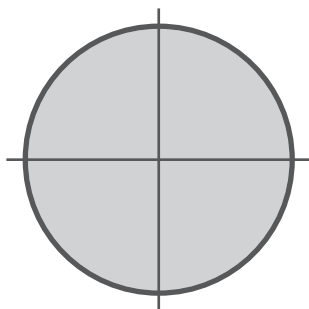
At 11.00 am two trumpeters of the Household Cavalry sounded the Last Post from the parapet of St Margaret's Church before the Exhortation ('The Binyon') was read by Mrs. Sara Jones, CBE. Mrs. Jones' reading was followed by the two-minute silence. Observed since the end of the First World War, the relevance of Remembrance Day and the two-minute silence remains undiminished and all traffic stops moving around the square and surrounding roads.

HRH Prince Philip was introduced at the *KSY* plot to our Plot Representative, Philip Moore, formerly of 4CLY, who saw service in North Africa and Burma during World War II.

The following members of the *Association* attended: Terry and Pam Bodman, Marie Cantoro, Barrie and Carol Corfield, Guy Farage, Marian Hannam, Cate Hawkins, Nick Illingworth, Tony Jewell, Pat May, David Meader, Pat and Phil Moore, Tim Rayson, Dan and Eileen Tomlin, Pete Tomlin, David Whitehouse, Keith Wrate, Kevin Wright.

Luncheon, following the Service, was held at The Civil Service Club.

"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"



THE KENT YEOMANRY IN THE BOER WAR

by Huw Jones



Raising the Imperial Yeomanry

The Second Boer War (1899-1902) was the culmination of two centuries of conflict between the British Empire and Dutch settlers (Boers) in South Africa. Its immediate causes were a growing British desire to incorporate the two Boer republics of The South African Republic (Transvaal) and the Orange Free State (OFS) into the empire, and the discovery of large deposits of gold in Transvaal.

Although war was only declared in October 1899, by the end of the year imperial forces had suffered a series of defeats. The advantage lay with the Boers. They had foreseen the conflict and recently purchased large quantities of modern armaments. Their regular forces were limited to a few artillerymen and armed police, but most males were farmers and other countrymen who were expert horsemen and marksmen and formed into local units, called commandos, in time of crisis.

On the British side, however, when war broke out the few regular and colonial cavalry units in theatre were widely dispersed and the slow-moving infantry were ill-suited to the rough and unfriendly terrain with vast distances and scarcity of supplies. General Sir Redvers Buller, who had only been arrived as commander of the Natal Field Force that October, had already been defeated at Colenso. The defeats at Magersfontein and Stormberg also involved forces under his command, earning him the nickname “Sir Reverse Buller”. Concerns about his performance and negative reports from the field led to Lord Roberts replacing him as overall commander in South Africa in January 1900.

General Buller remained as deputy commander and, in many ways, became the scapegoat for the British Army’s poor performance. *“Even so, Buller’s achievements have been obscured by his mistakes. In 1909, a French military critic, General Langlois, pointed out that it was Buller, not Roberts, who had the toughest job of the war – and it was Buller who was the innovator in countering Boer tactics. The proper use of cover, of infantry advancing in rushes, co-ordinated in turn with creeping barrages of artillery: these were the tactics of truly modern war, first evolved by Buller in Natal.”* (Pakenham) Another of Buller’s innovations was set out in a telegram of 16 December 1899 to Lord Lansdowne, the Secretary of State for War, in which he asked: *“Would it be possible for you to raise 8,000 irregulars in England, organised not in regiments but in companies of 100 men each? They should be equipped as Mounted Infantry, be able to shoot as well as possible and ride decently. I would amalgamate them with the colonists (i.e colonial forces). A party of the West Kent Yeomanry Cavalry¹ are among the best irregulars I have here. Mounted men are absolutely necessary to finish this war, or indeed to hold our own. Infantry cannot cover distances, with them one is always obliged to attack a prepared position, the very thing which ought not to be done, and the water difficulty is tremendous.”* (Roberts Papers, National Army Museum)

The British had recently used mounted infantry (MI) in the 1893 and 1896 campaigns against tribesmen in British South Africa (now Zimbabwe) and one mounted man on the veldt was reckoned to be worth three or four soldiers on foot. (Magnus) Buller’s telegram reinforced proposals, made by Lord Chesham and other yeomanry officers that October, to organise regiments of Yeomanry for war service and embryonic plans within the War Office for the use of volunteer forces. However, there was opposition, and Lord Wolseley, then Commander-in-Chief, and usually seen as an innovator, and a previous advocate of territorial forces, wrote to Lansdowne on 29 December expressing his concerns at the use of a force of untrained and ill-disciplined civilians. Lansdowne replied that *“The Boers are not, I suppose, very highly drilled or disciplined”*. (WO32/7866)

A committee of county yeomanry officers was formed on 19 December to oversee the work, handing over to the War Office proper in May 1900. The Royal Warrant, issued on 24 December 1899, stated that:

1. *Her Majesty’s Government have decided to raise for active service in South Africa a mounted infantry force, to be named ‘The Imperial Yeomanry’.*
2. *The force will be recruited from the Yeomanry, but Volunteers and civilians who possess the requisite qualifications will be specially enlisted in the Yeomanry for this purpose.*
3. *The force will be organized in companies of 115 rank and file, one captain and four subalterns to each company, preferably Yeomanry officers.*

4. *The term of enlistment for officers and men will be for one year, or not less than the period of the war.*
5. *Officers and men will bring their own horses, clothing, saddlery and accoutrements. Arms, ammunition, camp equipment and transport will be provided by the government.*
6. *The men to be dressed in Norfolk jackets, of woollen material of neutral colour, breeches and gaiters, lace boots, and felt hats. Strict uniformity of pattern will not be insisted on.*
7. *Pay to be at Cavalry rates, with a capitation grant for horses, clothing, etc.*
8. *Applications for enrolment should be addressed to Colonels commanding Yeomanry regiments, or to general officers commanding districts, to whom instructions will be issued.*
9. *Qualifications are: Candidates to be from 20 to 35 years of age, and of good character. Volunteers or civilian candidates must satisfy the Colonel of the regiment through which they enlist that they are good riders and marksmen, according to the Yeomanry standard.*

Lord Wolseley and the War Office's misgivings were, to an extent, understandable and echo Lord Kitchener's misgivings over the use of the Territorial Force during the Great War. In particular there was scepticism that a viable force could be created from almost nothing and that men who could ride, shoot and hunt would, somehow, become natural mounted riflemen and an asset rather than a liability.

Despite its designation as "Imperial Yeomanry" the new force was to be distinct from either a regular cavalry force or the existing county yeomanries. The MI role was emphasised by the use of the rifle as the main weapon, and organise, like infantry, into battalions and companies, with sections, although units often broke with official terminology and talked of squadrons and troops. Nor were full yeomanries called up; indeed home service and routine training continued throughout the conflict. A major national recruiting campaign ensued. Lansdowne expected to provide 4,000 soldiers but, in fact the IY eventually amounted to 11,000 in 131 companies.

The standing yeomanries provided the core and framework and, usually around half the officers and NCOs for each battalion. Dr Badsey calculates that a fifth of the IY came from the standing regiments (2,200 from a peacetime establishment of 8,829) meaning that a far higher proportion of junior ranks were fresh to the yeomanry, if not to military service. In our case five officers and 38 OR joined 36th (WKY) Company on formation, with a further ten OR joining subsequently. Colonel Frewen, of the East Kent Yeomanry, recorded that the first East Kent Company (33rd) came almost entirely from the REKMR, but that, although a second East Kent Company (53rd) was also formed "*none of the officers and few of the men had any connection with Kent*".

In all cases the balance of manpower came from volunteers, many upper or middle class (44 of the 62 peers and MPs serving in South Africa by April 1900 were IY) or ex-servicemen who met the necessary service criteria. The quality was high: of the 120 OR in 33rd (REK) company's first contingent, 19 were commissioned. Similarly many dropped rank to serve; Frewen was a Major and Honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the REKMR, but dropped to Captain to command the company. The call for recruits was made on 18 December, with the first contingent sailing on 27 January, arriving in South Africa on 21 February. The last of the force sailed on 14 April, arriving on 3 May. This was, of itself, a remarkable achievement although it left little, if any, time for individual training or the development of any tactical doctrine.

The Kent yeomanries sponsored the following IY companies:

33rd (Royal East Kent) Company, 11th Battalion IY

36th (West Kent) Company, 11th Battalion IY

53rd (Royal East Kent) Company, 14th then 11th Battalion IY

The West Kent Company's activities are documented in Lieutenant Colonel Edmeades's history of the West Kent yeomanry, published in 1909. The East Kent Yeomanry's regimental history, however, was published 1899 and so does not deal with the war. Nevertheless, it is possible to piece together something of what they did. In particular Colonel Frewen left an extensive diary of his experiences with the first contingent, which is quoted extensively below.

The First Contingents

The 33rd(REK) and 36th(WKY) Companies formed in early 1900 as part of 11th Battalion IY, the other two companies, 34th and 35th, being linked to the Middlesex Yeomanry. Unusually, the 33rd REK had an additional NCO and three private soldiers to serve the Colt machine gun on a Dundonald carriage presented by 2nd Lieutenant Herbert Ingram². Training was brief, given that all ranks were already trained, but included a week at the School of Musketry at Hythe, and then riding school and drill at the Cavalry Depot in Canterbury. On 27 February Frewen recorded that the 33rd (REK) marched from the depot to the station escorted by a band and local firemen carrying flaming torches as well as an *"enormous enthusiastic crowd...of such dimensions that the rear of the column had great difficulty reaching the station"*.

The 11th Battalion left Liverpool on the SS Cymric in late February, arriving in Capetown on 23 March. They then moved to the tented Yeomanry Camp at Maitland, arriving in the middle of a dust storm. There they drew equipment and remounts, receiving orders to move North to Bloemfontein on 19 April, arriving on 2 May. The battalion swiftly discovered that the campaign would be hard. The horses brought from England or issued at Cape Town, were in poor condition and their losses dominate accounts. Disease was also rife; Edmeades and Frewen both note that even during the battalion's two hour halt in Bloemfontein a string of funerals, mostly due to a major outbreak of enteric fever (typhoid), could be seen wending from the hospital camps in the town.

Frewen recorded the yeomens difficulties during this initial period. To lighten loads personal kit had been left in Cape Town "to follow" (and, when finally retrieved, had been *"very thoroughly looted of anything of conceivable value"*). The weather was *"Very hot but nights are cold with heavy dew which wets everything."* (1 May) *"...bivouached (sic) in a horrible place, the site of an old camp and the stink was terrible and it was very rocky. Turned in without food or drink"*. (4 May) Food was, at best, bully beef and biscuit supplemented by what could be bought or taken from farms, although the battalion was fined £70 for looting a "friendly farm". Nor was there much direction from on high: *"We were ordered to wait until we were supplied with four days rations and forage as we have none. We really want rest but we are all very keen to get in touch with the enemy."* (4 May)

Throughout the campaign shortages of food, fodder and other supplies were a perpetual worry. The IY had initially been clothed from its own resources – 36th (WKY)

Company's clothing, for example, being donated by the Company Commander. As the war progressed clothing wore out and could not be replaced – either because the Regular Army denied all responsibility, or because, simply, there was none to be had. Photographs show that Boer and imperial forces were increasingly indistinguishable. The toll on horses, which were unused to the workload, poor diet, climate and disease, was horrific. The set load for a horse was 20 stone (128kg) On 24 September 1900 Captain Pott (36th [WKY]) wrote in his diary *"Our horses are only getting ten lbs of mealies in cob per diem. English horses cannot eat this and it is no wonder that our horses cannot do the work when they are fed in this way."* (Quoted Vandenberg) Replacement horses, often procured from around the world, were untrained, often poor quality, and also died in droves. The only solution, was to find a hardy "Boer pony", which was used to the conditions, to carry less, or, often, to walk.

The battalion joined Lieutenant General Sir Leslie Rundle's 8th Division in the OFS (often referred to by the British as Orange River Colony). The division, which consisted of two infantry brigades, an IY brigade and a colonial MI brigade, formed the right flank of a sweep by several British columns along a front of 500 miles and involving over 100,000 men.

After a few alarms the first contact with the enemy came on 19 May when a patrol led by Lt Sondes sent Private Jorgensen to buy bread from a farm. He was fired on by three Boers but escaped unharmed. Frewen raided the farm that night. The owner was found in bed and denied knowledge, although Jorgensen recognised him and a recently-used carbine was found. The yeomen took the owner prisoner, and left with all the food they could find.

The 11th Battalion saw more serious action on 25 May when a force from one of the Middlesex companies was sent to occupy the town of Senekal, losing its commander and four privates killed and a further four wounded. Rundle, who had a reputation for thoroughness and caution (DNB) then halted at Senekal for supplies. On 28 May the 33rd (REK) formed the advance guard for an attack on a strong Boer force on a kopje at Biddulphsberg. The company participated in a "foolhardy" dismounted attack at dusk and came under heavy fire, losing some horses though, fortunately, no soldiers. That evening Frewen dined with Rundle and learned of the two companies of 13th Battalion IY which were besieged at Lindley, some 40 miles away, and that a relief force had failed to reach them.

The next day Rundle led his available force back to Biddulphsberg in an attempt to draw Boers from the beleaguered force. An initial artillery bombardment did little damage to the Boers and the assault ended in an intense fire fight, the brunt of which fell to 2nd Grenadier Guards which suffered around 180 casualties, including 30 killed. The confusion was compounded by brushfires which swept the battlefield, killing many of the Grenadiers' wounded. Frewen was scathing: *"It was an absolutely senseless fight, the enemy holding a position (that was) virtually impregnable and even had we succeeded in taking it, little would have been gained and they had a perfect line of retreat."*

The besieged yeomen at Lindley surrendered on 31 May after five days when they ran out of supplies. This led many to condemn their apparent lack of resistance (IY was said in England to stand for "I Yield") and the action reflected *"...the weakness of a hastily assembled, ill-disciplined volunteer force"* (Wilson)

On 6 June 1900, Pretoria, capital of the Transvaal, surrendered and on 28 July Fouriesburg, the last Boer-held town in the OFS, was also taken. Numerous Boers surrendered at the end of July with the IY often being called to provide escorts for prisoners over the next few weeks. The British also took Bethlehem, a town previously used by OFS President Steyn as a base. His CinC, General Marthinus Prinsloo, then surrendered the OFS forces unconditionally, with 36th (WKY) closely involved in his formal surrender with 4,000 burgers near Senekal in early July.

Although many Boers supported Prinsloo, others were furious, arguing that his recent election as CinC had been irregular and they needed time to decide what to do next. Boer hardliner Christiaan de Wet saw the surrender as near treason and Prinsloo's predecessor, General Roux, naively even went to the British camp to camp to dispute Prinsloo's authority to act in this way. *"If any one is in doubt as to what was the result of General Roux's absurd escapade, I have only to say that the English had one prisoner the more!"* (de Wet)

De Wet fled to the Transvaal, which fought on, abandoning most of his baggage in the interest of speed and losing more to marauding British columns. He and President Steyn continued to evade imperial forces through the autumn, increasingly acting as a guerrilla force. On 7 August 1901 Kitchener announced the British annexation of the Transvaal and OFS: henceforth all active commandos were to be treated as rebels. The IY, who had been looking forward to going home, found themselves retained due to the shortage of mounted troops.

In early August, the Division moved to Harrismith, OFS, *"a nice little town"* which was to be its main base for several months. Tasks included sweeps of the region, roughly between Johannesburg and Basutoland (Lesotho) for horses and stray Boers. On one of these Lt Birch of 33rd (REK) Company encountered the other East Kent Company (53rd) which was down to two officers, 30 mounted men and 40 more dismounted by lack of horses. The Division's shortages had now reached such levels that on 6 August Mr Pickersgill, MP for Bethnal Green, asked in the House of Commons *"...what there was in the nature of the country or in the operations involved to necessitate the sufferings and privations to which the British troops under General Rundle have been exposed; who was responsible for the victualling of these troops, and what was the base from which they were supplied; whether quantities of provisions were stacked at country sidings while these troops were starving; and whether stops have now been taken to supply these troops with adequate food and other necessities."* The government replied that *"No official information has reached the War Office in regard to the reported privations of General Rundle's force. Such details of the campaign are not reported to the War Office, and the Secretary of State does not propose to make any inquiries of Lord Roberts on the subject."* Even so, when 36th (WKY) returned to Maidstone the local newspaper described their service with *"General Rundle's Hungry Eighth Division."*

More cheerfully, Frewen records some rest, the arrival of mail and *"stores sent by (Colonel) Harris"* who, it will be remembered, sponsored the original detachment and, presumably, did his best to provide comforts and supplement the commissariat. Private Firman was injured playing polo in early September and Private Brook Hunt left to join the Yeomanry Depot at Pretoria for commissioning. Frewen noted *"He is one of my best men and I would not have let him go, had I not thought this war was nearly over."*

The guerrilla war became both more frustrating and more vicious. The British now regarded those who fought on as rebels, while Boers were often accused of robbing the wounded and looting bodies. On 10 September 33rd (REK) found the body of a native despatch runner who had been shot by Boers. In response Lt Anneley and his section were ordered to burn two nearby farms used by the enemy. The battalion continued to search farms and destroy those associated with the enemy, although Frewen was unhappy, writing of one such occasion at Lafelberg in September that “...*I had to carry out the distasteful task of burning three farms, all having women and children in them*” even though he conceded that British forces had been previously fired at from the buildings and that his Company always tried to ensure that there was some form of shelter left for those burned out. The Battalion was also extensively used to guard the numerous, slow-moving, convoys vital to British operations, but which also made tempting and soft targets for the Boers, who were increasingly short of supplies as the British denied them access to local resources.

This scorched earth policy, which included corralling Boer families in camps, was widely condemned but reduced Boer fighting capacity considerably, although it also increased their determination to resist. Rather than relying on friendly farms and families for support the commandos were reduced to whatever they could loot. Ammunition and weapons were either captured or, often, scavenged from items dropped or left behind at British camps and halts. The British also destroyed any animal hides and male clothing that they found, forcing the Boers increasingly to resort to women’s clothing or even stripping prisoners of their uniforms. This in turn caused conflict as the British regarded those captured in British uniforms as breaking the laws of war and liable to summary execution. (de Wet, Reitz)

Despite the patrolling, General Rundle failed to secure the area. On 16 September a recce by 36th (WKY) was held up outside Senekal. The next day 33rd (REK) took part in a move towards Bronkhoutfontein. The force was engaged by a large enemy force and the company dismounted in order to move forward and support the Derbyshire Yeomanry. Despite heavy rifle and pom-pom (1 pounder automatic) fire, casualties were limited to bruising caused by proximity to a shell burst and the Boers withdrew. General Rundle, however, kept the MI in the firing line and refused to allow them to mount and ride down the Boers, or at least to force them to abandon their slow-moving wagons and supplies. Frewen complained in his diary of “...*the mortification of seeing the whole of the enemy escape. If all the British Generals conduct a fight like this was conducted – no wonder the war is protracted.*”

The 8th Division now began a major move to round up the enemy in the North East of the OFS, with Bethlehem as its objective. On 27 September 33rd (REK) were engaged by scattered enemy at Elands Kopje. General Rundle again rejected Frewen’s request to be allowed to rush the small enemy force, and he complained that “*Any dash on our part is stopped by the General and the enemy in weak numbers holds us up at every coign of vantage, while the Column is halted and arrangements are made to attack. Anything more degrading to us as it is impossible to conceive.*” On 29 September, however, the Division was broken up with 36th (WKY) forming part of a move on Reitz and 33rd (REK) coming under General Hunter: Perhaps not surprisingly Frewen recorded that “*We are much pleased at the transfer.*”

The 33rd (REK) now led Hunter's move to Frankfort, which was to be their base for the next four months, arriving on 3 October. The burning of farms encountered continued and Frewen still saw this as *"a brutal and senseless undertaking"*. It appeared that the British were now to garrison towns in the OFS and the force was ordered to draw 30 days rations. The stores party, however, returned empty handed, Frewen disconsolately recording that *"We are now on bare rations just like the men and are very badly fed."*

The force had several successes, in particular on 11 October, Frewen led a force of the 33rd (REK) and MI from the Royal West Kent Regiment (WKR), in a night attack on a Boer laager five miles outside Frankfort. They encircled the position in preparation for a dawn attack and, despite a full moon, were not discovered until 03.45 when a Boer followed a wandering horse into the waiting WKR. In the ensuing fight the WKR lost one killed for ten enemy dead and 22 prisoners. The British also seized weapons, horses and saddles, including one taken from a 33rd (REK) horse killed on 28 May.

Patrolling continued throughout October, although native reports of large Boer forces nearby meant that this was stopped on 24 October as too dangerous. A further success occurred on 26 October when the 33rd (REK) went to General Pretorius's farm to burn it. Despite reports to the contrary, Pretorius and his son were visiting and captured with a large amount of ammunition. On 4 November the 33rd (REK) had to rescue a party of MI that was bringing cattle into the town. Private Ferguson rescued one of the MI whose horse had been shot and later received the DCM.

In December the garrison was struck by typhoid. Caused by contaminated water the disease killed more than the Boers and, by 9 December, had put 23 of the 69 members of 33rd (REK) in hospital: several died. On 3 January 1901, Frewen's problems were compounded by the loss of ten men to provide an escort for Colonel Grove, although Frewen dryly noted that he preferred an IY escort to MI from his own RWK. Despite Frewen's misgivings, the detachment returned in February, and soon after, Frankfort's garrison and white population were evacuated, *"We said goodbye to the place without a single regret."*

Frewen had also fallen ill by this time and on 1 February took stock in his diary. He had just discovered that he had been gazetted major on 22 August, and reckoned that 33rd (REK) had travelled 1,971 miles since its arrival. Ten of his soldiers had died, mostly of disease. Frewen's year was up and he returned home, initially as an invalid, reaching the UK in April 1901.

Captain Pott and the first contingent of 36th (WKY) returned to Maidstone with 40 of his company, on 19 July. The balance of the company was mostly accounted for by those invalided home prematurely, some who had stayed to accompany baggage, and some remaining in South Africa after commissioning or, such as Captain Blackman, who had taken over the Company, signing on for a second tour. The Company had lost four dead and two wounded. On 22 July, the Maidstone Corporation, in carriages, and cavalry depot band led the whole regiment in procession through large crowds to a church service and then to a civic banquet. The active service contingent marched in khaki, the rest in full dress. The Mayor, F.J. Oliver, welcomed the regiment warmly, reflecting on the novelty that he, as an NCO in the regiment, should have the duty of welcoming them home. Those returning from active service were presented with

engraved silver cigarette cases; the Trust has that presented to Tpr A Page (KSY:2008-14) on display at Hever Castle.

The Second Contingents

As engagements expired, experienced troops returned home or, in many cases, changed to units offering better pay, although in January 1901, IY pay was increased from British regular cavalry rates of 1/5 (7p) a day to match colonial forces rates of 5/- (25p), to stem the loss. Pay was one of the deficiencies arising from the way the IY was raised. There were also parallel depots and remount systems to the regular army and, as units had initially clothed their contingents from private resources, the army flatly denied responsibility for replacing items that were lost or worn out in the harsh conditions. As the second contingent, raised at the end of 1900, arrived, there were also difficulties between seasoned members of the first contingent and new arrivals who had been promoted while serving with parent units in the UK. The upshot was that when the second contingent was formed in the Spring of 1901, it was looked upon as providing a relief force for the first. A Major Wyndham-Knight précised evidence given to the Elgin Committee's enquiry into aspects of the Boer War with the words "*There should never have been any second or third contingents.*" (Athawes). However popular enthusiasm continued and the better pay ensured that recruits were still generally of a better standard than the regular force. Many officers were commissioned from the first contingent.

The second contingent, and those who had stayed on, were an important element in General Kitchener's strategy in the guerrilla war of 1901-02, and particularly, operations against the elusive General de Wet. Kitchener ordered a series of defended lines to restrict and channel enemy movement. The Boers were to be driven like game against these stoplines which consisted of chains of stone and corrugated iron blockhouses, each holding around a dozen infantry, and protected by belts of barbed wire. They were close enough to support each other and cover the intervening ground. De Wet, however, remembered the scheme as a huge white elephant draining resources and claimed that Boer forces could usually find or fight their way through the lines. He wrote that "*The English were so busy building blockhouses that they had no time to fight us.*" In fact, for the Boers, bigger problems were lack of supplies, climate, loss of farms, and new British tactics, especially the numerous mobile columns now fielded, often for "de Wet hunts" and night attacks which induced panic in Boers accustomed to working only in daylight.

In December 1901 all three Kent Yeomanry companies were deployed to cover the building of a new stretching of blockhouses from Harrismith to Tardoux Farm, 25 miles East of Bethlehem in the OFS. General Rundle had split his covering force into four with 11th Battalion IY, a 15 pounder and a pom-pom holding the 2,600 foot high hill known as Groenkop on Tweefontein Farm to one side of the line being built. On its western side Groenkop has a precipice, on the north and south a steep descent, and on the east a gentle slope which ran down to the plain. Here the yeomen camped, setting up rows of tents and horse lines. The infantry originally assigned to protect this site was removed by the commander of the mainly infantry force covering the other side of the line. As a result the pickets originally sited at the base of the rear of the hill were abandoned. De Wet, by now desperate for horses and supplies receded the site carefully and ordered his commandos to climb the western cliff and attack from the rear.

We succeeded in coming to the mountain unobserved, and at once began the climb. It was exactly two o'clock in the morning of December 25th, 1901.

When we had gone up about half-way we heard the challenge of a sentry:

"Halt; who goes there?"

Then followed a few shots.

My command rang out through the night – "Burghers, Storm!"

The word was taken up by the burghers themselves, and on all sides one heard "Storm! Storm!"

It was a never-to-be-forgotten moment. Amidst the bullets, which we could hear whistling above and around us, the burghers advanced to the top, calling out, "Storm! Storm!"

The mountain, however, was so steep that it can scarcely be said that we stormed it; it was much more of a climb. Often our feet slipped from under us, and we fell to the ground; but in an instant we were up again and climbed on, and on, to gain the summit.

I think that after the sentry heard us, three or four minutes must have elapsed before the troops, who were lying asleep in their tents or on the veldt, were awakened and could come out, because their camp was about a hundred paces distant from our point of attack.

Directly we reached the top the deafening roar of a heavy fight began, and lasted from fifteen to twenty minutes. Shortly before this the Armstrong gun and the Maxim-Nordenfeldt had each fired two shots, but they fired no more; as we reached the top the gunners were shot down at their guns.

After a short but desperate struggle, the English gave way, or surrendered, and we took possession of the Armstrong and Maxim-Nordenfeldt.

We continued to fire on the troops, who had retreated to a short distance. Again they gave way, and took up another position a little further on, and so it went on for about two thousand paces, and then the English took to flight.

As we had no horses with us and it was dark, we did not pursue the fleeing enemy, but returned to the camp. The whole engagement lasted, so far as I could judge, for about an hour. I cannot say for certain, because I made no note of the time.

It was a party of Yeomanry with whom we had been dealing, and I must say they behaved very gallantly under exceptionally trying circumstances; for it is always to be expected that when men are attacked during the night a certain amount of confusion must ensue. (de Wet)

A force of infantry from the other camp, sent to investigate, was repelled and the Boers hastily looted the camp, loading wagons and leaving with 500 horses "in the pink of condition" (de Wet), the two guns and a great quantity of rifles and ammunition. British losses were about one hundred and sixteen dead and wounded, and two hundred and forty prisoners of war. The prisoners were released the next day – without their outer clothing, which had also been appropriated by their captors. The Boers lost 14 dead and 30 wounded, with two more dying later.

An granite obelisk commemorating the Battle of Tweefontein was erected on the peak of Groenkop, listing the names and units of the seven officers and 51 ORs killed in the action. The KSY archives record 24 members of the Kent IY as killed or wounded in the action:

36th (WKY) Company

Lt J.S. Hudson
Pte R.W. Bond
Pte J.H. Chudleigh
Pte G.A. Lambert
Pte T. Mannering
Pte A. Massey
Pte W. South
Pte E. Stevens
Pte H.P Thirkell

53rd (REK) Company

Capt H.S. Crawley (k)
Lt H.E Parsons (w)
Lt Mowatt (w)
WO2 J. Mahon
Cpl H.S. Akehurst
Pte P. Orchin
Pte F.A. Davies
Pte C.H. Derisley
Pte W.G.Dack
Pte E. Collard
Pte F.E. Ward
Pte W.J. Hopkins
Pte C. Rumfitt
Pte P.J. Grist
Sgt J. Strand
Pte M. Clapton
Pte H.A. Wilson
Pte J.W. Sansom

The officers were also given individual graves and headstones. In 1958 the South African War Graves Board exhumed the remains, moving them, and the memorials, from their isolated, vulnerable and neglected spot, to a memorial garden in Harrismith. In addition, the East Kent Yeomanry commemorated their own dead and the KSY Museum Trust recently purchased a brass bugle (KSY:2010-1) bearing the inscription:

53RD SQUADRON (EAST KENT) IMPERIAL YEOMANRY

ORANGE FREE STATE 1901-2

Officers

Capt Cooper Killed June
Capt Crawley Killed Dec
Lieut Wyatt Edgell Wounded Mar
Lieut Loraine Wounded July
Lieut H.G.Parsons Wounded Dec
Lieut Mowatt Wounded Dec 1901

After their tour, the many Boer War veterans returned to the UK. Some, such as Colonel Frewen, resumed training with the home regiment soon afterwards. Many IY fought in the First, and even Second, World Wars. The last reunion of Kent West IY was held in October 1966 when Privates Edward Bonny, Sydney Clark and Johnny Corp met in Maidstone. All had served in 36th (WKY) Company during 1900-01 and had been on parade when it was welcomed back to Maidstone in July 1901.

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Hansard

Dictionary of National Biography

As so often Rudyard Kipling neatly sums up the MI's trials and tribulations:

M.I. (Mounted Infantry of the Line)

I WISH my mother could see me now, with a fence-post under my arm,
And a knife and a spoon in my putties that I found on a Boer farm,
Atop of a sore-backed Argentine, with a thirst that you couldn't buy.
I used to be in the Yorkshires once
(Sussex, Lincolns, and Rifles once),
Hampshires, Glosters, and Scottish once! (ad lib.)
But now I am M.I.

That is what we are known as – that is the name you must call
If you want officers' servants, pickets an' 'orseguards an' all –
Details for buryin'-parties, company-cooks or supply –
Turn out the chronic Ikonas! Roll up the – ³M.I.!

My 'ands are spotty with veldt-sores, my shirt is a button an' frill,
An' the things I've used my bay'nit for would make a tinker ill!
An' I don't know whose dam' column I'm in, nor where we're trekkin' nor why.
I've trekked from the Vaal to the Orange once –

From the Vaal to the greasy Pongolo once –
(Or else it was called the Zambesi once) –
For now I am M.I.

That is what we are known as – we are the push you require
For outposts all night under freezin', an' rearguard all day under fire.
Anything 'ot or unwholesome? Anything dusty or dry?
Borrow a bunch of Ikonas! Trot out the – M.I.!

Our Sergeant-Major's a subaltern, our Captain's a Fusilier –
Our Adjutant's "late of Somebody's 'Orse," an' a Melbourne auctioneer;
But you couldn't spot us at 'arf a mile from the crackest caval-ry.
They used to talk about Lancers once,
Hussars, Dragoons, an' Lancers once,
'Elmets, pistols, an' carbines once,
But now we are M.I.!

That is what we are known as – we are the orphans they blame
For beggin' the loan of an 'ead-stall an' makin' a mount to the same.
'Can't even look at their 'orselines but some one goes bellerin' "Hi!
"Ere comes a burglin' Ikona!" Footsack⁴ you – M.I.!

We're trekkin' our twenty miles a day an' bein' loved by the Dutch,
But we don't hold on by the mane no more, nor lose our stirrups – much;
An' we scout with a senior man in charge where the 'oly white flags fly.
We used to think they were friendly once,
Didn't take any precautions once
(Once, my ducky, an' only once!)
But now we are M.I.!

That is what we are known as – we are the beggars that got
Three days "to learn equitation," an' six months o' bloomin' well trot!
Cow-guns, an' cattle, an' convoys – an' Mister De Wet on the fly –
We are the rollin' Ikonas! We are the – M.I.

The new fat regiments come from home, imaginin' vain V. C.'s
(The same as your talky-fighty men which are often Number Threes⁵),
But our words o' command are "Scatter" an' "Close" an' "Let your wounded lie."
We used to rescue 'em noble once, –
Givin' the range as we raised 'em once,
Gettin' 'em killed as we saved 'em once –
But now we are M.I.

That is what we are known as – we are the lanterns you view
After a fight round the kopjes, lookin' for men that we knew;
Whistlin' an' callin' together, 'altin' to catch the reply: –
"Elp me! O 'elp me, Ikonas! This way, the – M.I.!"

I wish my mother could see me now, a-gatherin' news on my own,
 When I ride like a General up to the scrub and ride back like Tod Sloan⁶,
 Remarkable close to my 'orse's neck to let the shots go by.
 We used to fancy it risky once
 (Called it a reconnaissance once),
 Under the charge of an orf'cer once,
 But now we are M.I.!

That is what we are known as – that is the song you must say
 When you want men to be Mausered at one and a penny a day;
 We are no five-bob Colonials – we are the 'ome-made supply,
 Ask for the London Ikonas! Ring up the – M.I.!

I wish myself could talk to myself as I left 'im a year ago;
 I could tell 'im a lot that would save 'im a lot on the things that 'e ought to know!
 When I think o' that ignorant barrack-bird, it almost makes me cry.
 I used to belong in an Army once
 (Gawd! what a rum little Army once),
 Red little, dead little Army once!
 But now I am M.I.!

That is what we are known as – we are the men that have been
 Over a year at the business, smelt it an' felt it an' seen.
 We 'ave got 'old of the needful – you will be told by and by;
 Wait till you've 'eard the Ikonas, spoke to the old M.I.!
 Mount – march, Ikonas! Stand to your 'orses again!
 Mop off the frost on the saddles, mop up the miles on the plain.
 Out go the stars in the dawnin', up goes our dust to the sky,
 Walk – trot, Ikonas! Trek jou⁷ the old M.I.!

(Rudyard Kipling)

¹ Quoted Badsey who correctly notes that refers in fact to the party of East Kent Yeomanry which Colonel the Lord Harris, who had substantial commercial interests in South Africa, had sent in early 1899 to help train local forces. Frewen (q.v) also saw the REKMR party as instrumental in the decision to create the IY. See "The Sharpshooter" 2007 for details of the contingent's service with the South African Light Horse.

² This was later presented to the City of Canterbury and is in the city museum.

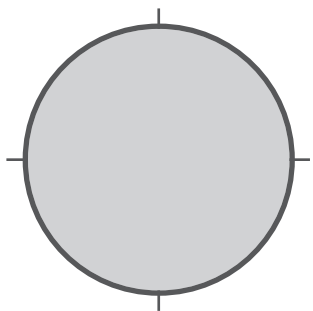
³ Number according to taste and service of audience (RK).

⁴ Strictly voetsak. A very rude word in Afrikaans.

⁵ Horse-holders when in action, and therefore generally under cover.

⁶ Famous turn of the century jockey.

⁷ Get ahead.



Alam El Halfa +70

by Daniel Taylor

Despite the brightness of the morning, there was a sharp chill to the air as the members and guests of the *Kent & Sharpshooters Yeomanry* gathered outside the Queen's Chapel, St James Palace, shortly before eleven o'clock on 16th November. The coolness of the morning was soon offset by the warm bonhomie that is so typical of such a gathering. Familiar greetings and warm handshakes soon made us forget the cold altogether as we took up conversations we had last year – or on our numerous excursions to foreign battlefields – as if no time had passed at all.

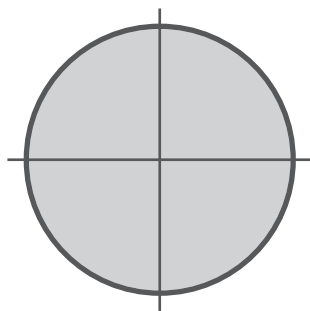
Nigel Rainbow, Trumpet Major to the Regiment, brought us to order and we filed inside the chapel. Sunlight streamed through the glorious, ornate window behind the altar, glinting off the gold detailed decoration inside. The Chapel was created by Inigo Jones in 1623 for the intended wedding of Prince Charles to the Spanish Infanta and was refurbished by Sir Christopher Wren after the Restoration. A place, therefore, of most suitable history.

The service marked the 65th gathering of the Association on the 71st anniversary of the Battle of Bir El Gubi. This year it was decided to make a special commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Alam Halfa – part of what is better known as the First Battle of El Alamein. As part of the tribute to those who took part in Alam Halfa, Tim Rayson told the story of the battle, drawing from an account by Dick Tryon, a troop leader in a composite squadron of Grant tanks. The narrative perfectly conveyed the tension, fear, discomfort and unexpected humour that characterises accounts of the *Sharpshooters* at war. It encapsulated the spirit and brotherhood of the shared peril of warfare and could not fail to move those assembled. Mark Hodson then gave an address which painted the link to those members of the Regiment who are now engaged in Afghanistan or who are in the process of training for deployment. Our link with the past and dedication to the future was perfectly joined. Mike Shaw movingly read an extract from *Pilgrims Progress* and led our prayers. The *Association's* President, Guy Farage, then called upon the Reverend Bill Scott of the Chapel Royal to bless the new Banner using a modified form of the words used when the Guidon was presented and blessed in 1963. We were fortunate to have one of the Regiment's WWII veterans, Phillip Moore, present to apply suitable gravitas to the reading from *For the Fallen*, before a two minute silence was held.

After the service, we retired to the Civil Service Club where a delicious lunch was laid on. The meal was presided over by the Association President, Guy Farage and a convivial afternoon was spent topped off with a fine glass of port.

At the heart of these gatherings is remembrance. This is not a misplaced attempt to hold the past in aspic and view it through rose tinted glasses. It is, rather, a demonstration of the desire to pass on the torch to generations new: holding to the memory of the fallen, and using that memory to fuel the ethos and spirit of the Regiment into the future. It is the sort of event at which the Sharpshooters are unsurpassed.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
*We **will** remember them.*



ROYAL GLOUCESTER HUSSARS

**REPORT FROM
SYA LINKMAN DAVE CARTER**

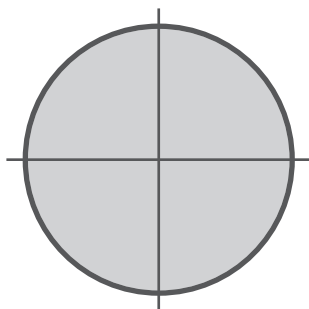
Only a couple of events from the RGH that are of interest to us this year:

Badminton Horse Trials, 2nd - 6th May

Even if you have no interest in horses, this is a great event to attend. It is basically a huge country fair with loads to eat, drink and of course spend your money on! All Sharpshooters are welcome to visit the Wessex Yeomanry hospitality tent.

El Gubi Memorial Service, 24th November

This is held at the church in the grounds of Badminton House. Whilst timings remain to be confirmed it is usually in the late morning with tea and biccies provided by His Grace prior to the service. A lunch afterwards at a nearby hostelry could be arranged for visiting Sharpshooters.



BIR EL GUBI – A VIEW FROM A DIFFERENT PAIR OF EYES

We got going early to make sure nobody caught us napping. It was a cold clear morning and it began with the sort of action we were used to, a dust-up with another bunch of Italian tanks. We chased them north towards the well at Bir Gubi, with the 22nd Armoured Brigade's new Crusader tanks joining in. Gubi was surrounded by enemy trucks, a tempting target, but what happened next was thrilling and horrible in equal parts.

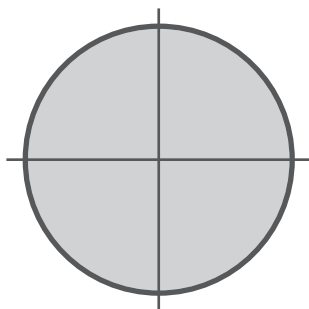
We had grandstand seats for what they say was the nearest thing to a cavalry charge by tanks seen in the whole war but those enemy trucks were not what they seemed. They were a disguise for well-dug-in anti-tank guns. Soon all you could see was dust and smoke. Our tanks ran right through the middle of the enemy positions, running over them in their trenches but they were no match for the guns and they were decimated in the process.

Orders came through on the wireless for us to go in and collect prisoners. They claimed Gubi had been captured but the smoke cleared enough for us to see that it was still very lively indeed and spitting both artillery and anti-tank fire, so Captain Franklyn countermanded the orders, luckily for us. By the late afternoon, 22nd Armoured had knocked out sixty Italian tanks but they had lost twenty five new Crusaders. It didn't bode well for when they would come up against the Panzers.

As it got dark, we went in to see if any of our disabled tanks could be recovered. Some of them were still smoking and there were dead and wounded from both sides spread all around the battlefield. At least two of our tanks had simply shed their tracks. There was a lot of engine noise and shouting coming from Gubi and hearing people approaching, we managed to catch a prisoner.

The above was from the Book *The Man who broke into Auschwitz* by Denis Avey, published by Hodder & Stoughton in 2011.

Denis Avey served in the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, one of the motorised Battalions in the 7th Support Group, 7th Armoured Division "The Desert Rats" during Operation Crusader (November 1941), when he observed the first action of *The Sharpshooters* at Bir el Gubi.



THE LOST SQUADRON

by Dan Taylor

In reading most accounts of the battle of Villers-Bocage one could be forgiven for asking ‘what on earth were A Squadron doing on Point 213 after they had been cut off?’. After all, they were there for around three or four hours. Didn’t they make any effort to get away? As it turns out, they did.

New photographic interpretation, a reassessment of some of the personal accounts, and an interview with a surviving veteran have begun to paint a much fuller picture of those three missing hours. This fresh interpretation of their action sheds a whole new light on A Squadron’s part in the battle.

So, to recap: It is 13th June 1944, exactly a week after D-Day. 4th County of London Yeomanry are the lead regiment of 22nd Armoured Brigade’s advance deep behind enemy lines in an attempt to envelop the elite Panzer Lehr Division and capture the high ground around the market town of Villers-Bocage. After a short overnight stop, Lt-Col Lord Arthur Cranley conducted a cautious advance to the town, arriving at about 0830-hrs. He sends the leading A Squadron to hold the high ground to the East, Point 213. The Sharpshooters’ A Squadron are supported by an Artillery OP tank from 5th Royal Horse Artillery. The accompanying motorized infantry company (A Company, 1RB) had halted on the road leading out of the town with the exception of the officers and senior NCOs who were heading up to 213 for an O Group. Cranley is following them up the hill to Point 213 when pandemonium breaks out.

Unknown to the British, the lead contingent of a company of Tiger Tanks had spent the previous night sheltering in a lane running parallel to, and south of, the road between Villers and Point 213. The German commander staged a now notorious attack on the British column whilst his four remaining Tiger tanks are left to cover the troops on the hill’s summit.

Perhaps the most glaring omission from my book was the absence of any information as to where three of the four Sherman Fireflies (17-pdr gun armed conversion of the Sherman tank) were situated. As these were the only tanks which could put up a fight with the Tiger tanks, their fate is key to understanding A Squadron’s plight. In the intervening time, photographs of each of them have come to light and in two cases this has revealed their location. Two still photographs and a large section of newsreel film reveal ‘Blondie’ (**Fig A**), thought to be the tank of Sgt Singer. It is on the Route Nationale with its turret rotated to the right. It is clear that it attempted to engage the Germans before being knocked out. The road makes a distinctive change in elevation



of around 400m from Point 213 and this is clearly shown in the background of the film excerpt thus revealing its location.

A still photograph of a Firefly named 'Pistolpackinmamma' (**Fig B**) gave very few clues of its whereabouts except for a section of collapsed stone wall. Again, the newsreel came to my rescue. One of the film sections was taken from a vehicle as it passed the wrecks of the Rifle Brigade's vehicles (**Fig C**). Dimly in the background, the location of 'Blondie' can be made out on the right of the road. Closer to the camera, there is another blurred shape over to the left of the road. Comparing this image with the aerial photograph, taken on 17th June 1944, there is sufficient information to place the Firefly some 200m behind Blondie. It also fits with Sgt Ken Weightman's account, being badly burnt out and slewed across the road – blocking the main line of retreat for A Squadron.

In my original analysis photographs showing four Cromwell tanks from 2 and 3 Troops (**Fig D**) placed them in the orchard to the south of Point 213. Close study of the aerial photograph failed to reveal any marks in this orchard that might reveal their location. The slope of the ground and the sun position in the pictures were also difficult to corroborate with any accounts. At the 2010 El Gubi dinner I met Paddy O'Neill and he provided the piece of the jigsaw that had been missing. Paddy was in 2 troop and, ignorant of my concerns, told his story. He described how he was on the main road between the town and Point 213 when the attack started. The road behind him was blocked by a burning tank, so he headed into the field to the north of the road, away from the German fire. His tank was followed by others and he vividly recalled how fallen branches were dragged in front of their tanks to provide some cover from sight, if not fire. The numerous pictures taken of the 'orchard' tanks all appear to show just such an attempt at camouflage. The fields to the north of the road were scoured for some evidence and a single orchard stands out on the aerial photograph. Not only does it have some shadows which the previous conclusion lacked, there is also a clear set of track marks leading from the road to the orchard. Though the new bypass road crosses the orchard in question, a metal detectorist managed to run his device over the remaining corner of the orchard. He found numerous scraps, including the base of a British 75mm shell case. Whilst not conclusive, this provides the most compelling resolution as to their position to date.

The conclusion from these deductions highlights a very different situation up on Point 213 after the initial attack. Instead of the whole squadron sitting on top of the hill, it is now apparent that perhaps half of their fighting strength was knocked out or cut off half way up the hill. This left Cranley unable to concentrate his forces and with very limited infantry support. It may be that he only had one Firefly within his perimeter and it is this that would have prevented an attempt at a direct withdrawal.

Whilst the account by Captain Christopher Milner (2i/c 1RB) suggested that the Sharpshooters had attempted a push to the east, there was only photographic evidence of an attempt along the lane to the North (**Fig E**). The solution came from a surprising source. There are pictures showing two tanks from the advance – a 2 Troop Cromwell called 'Shufti Cush' and an OP Cromwell commanded by Captain Roy Dunlop – somewhere on the main road (**Figs F1 & F2**). I had assumed that they were to the west of the summit but the background had never matched what should have been there. Fortunately Simon Trew, a Lecturer at RMA Sandhurst, photocopied the entire

Bundesarchiv photograph collection for Normandy. Amongst them were some previously unseen photographs of these two tanks, only this time they showed a building in the background. Though the 1944 aerial photograph proved unhelpful, a set of aerial photographs taken by the French in 1947 showed the road further to the East. The house in question was identified and a trip to the site gave an impressively good match with the background in the photographs. It is around half a mile East of Point 213.

It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that an attempt to escape to the East was indeed carried out. Further analysis of the photographs taken on Point 213 (**Figs G1 & G2**) provides another insight into the last moments before the position collapsed. It now seems significant that ‘Alla Keefek’, the well-known Firefly pictured on 213, is shown pointing to the west with its gun rotated to point back to the east. A Close Support Cromwell on the other side of the road is also pictured facing west with its turret pointing to the rear. Is it not likely that these tanks also took part in the attempted breakout but were forced to return to Point 213, engaging the incoming Tigers over their rear decking as they retired?

This new information paints a far richer portrait of a struggle for survival against heavy odds. Far from sitting passively awaiting a rescue, it now seems clear that the limited resources available on Point 213 were employed in an aggressive action to extricate themselves. The foray to the east resulted in the loss of Dunlop’s OP Cromwell which removed the last vestige of cover that could be called in from 22nd Armoured Brigade. With that, the position became untenable, and the order to attempt escape on foot became unavoidable.

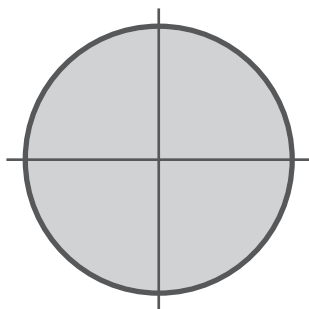
Remembrance in Australia

I was fortunate to be in Brisbane for the week before Remembrance Sunday 2012 so I purchased a Remembrance Cross, dedicated it to the memory of the Sharpshooters and placed it into their Field of Remembrance in the ANZAC Square located between Ann Street and Adelaide Street (opposite Post Office Square). It was a very peaceful area surrounded by a white picket fence and



other monuments dedicated to conflicts that the Australian forces had been involved in through the years. After the Field of Remembrance closes, the crosses are collected and burnt, and the ashes are scattered at the First World War battlefields in northern France and Belgium.

Simon Malik



THE YEOMANRY PATROL OF THE LONG RANGE DESERT GROUP

(Part 4)

by Dave Whitehouse

As we learned from the previous parts in the 2009, 2010 and 2011 Newsletters, men from both the *Sharpshooters* and the *Kent Yeomanry* served with the famous *Long Range Desert Group (LRDG)* during World War II. At the conclusion of the desert campaign, the LRDG were initially deployed to the Mediterranean and Aegean theatres and then the Balkans.

The first patrol from Stormonth-Darling's 'B' Squadron was sent out in mid August 1944 on Operation 'Behemoth'. This patrol comprising of men from Y2 and commanded by desert veteran Captain Archie Gibson was tasked "to establish an OP (Observation Point) near Mostar Aerodrome for the purpose of keeping continuous watch and reporting immediately all aircraft movements during daylight hours by W/T special link."

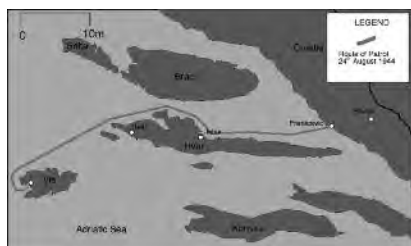
The plan was that the intelligence gained would be passed to the Balkan Air Force (BAF) to intercept enemy aircraft soon after they took off.

Accordingly the patrol, which included Sharpshooter Gilbert Jetley and Kent Yeoman Cyril Smith, set off from Vis, an island to which Marshall Tito had recently moved his partisan headquarters, on the 14th August in a small partisan supply vessel. The patrol landed in the early hours of the 15th but had arrived at the start of a German offensive against the partisans. As none of the latter were available to guide the patrol they returned to Vis.

Some ten days latter the patrol returned, and landed at Franicevic north of the Neretva River, which runs through Mostar some 30 miles inland, on the night of the 25th.

Here the patrol made contact with the partisans who were able to arrange porters to carry their stores and equipment. The patrol made its way inland, slowly gaining altitude, until reaching the peak of a range of rugged hills at 2am. After snatching some sleep, they made contact with a local partisan Kommandant-Major. Although he was able to arrange a partisan escort, he warned that movement was extremely hazardous as the Germans and Ustashi controlled the area. Nevertheless, on the evening of the 27th the patrol proceeded on its way.

As dawn broke on the 28th, the patrol reached what was left of the village of Bajjo, which had been destroyed by an earlier German offensive. It was decided that the patrol would remain here whilst a partisan recce party went ahead.



Early the next morning, the sound of small-arms fire at close quarters alerted the patrol to the enemy raid. The patrol and their partisan escort immediately took up a defensive position, but it was soon apparent that they were surrounded by a sizable Ustashi force numbering some eighty men. In the inevitable heavy fighting that ensued, two partisan were killed and several more wounded. The patrol, although unscathed, had used up nearly all of its ammunition. Furthermore by the 31st August, information had been received that the Ustashi had learned of the LRDG presence in the area, and it had been for their benefit that the raid had been mounted. It was becoming clear that it was going to be impossible for the patrol to proceed to its destination, and a radio message from B Squadron HQ instructed Archie Gibson to remain where he was. The patrol's new orders were to report German dispositions and movements in the area.

Archie Gibson moved his men back to Bajjo where they were joined by the partisan Ljubuski Battalion. This was a sizeable force and it was hoped that with their Bren machine guns and other automatic weapons, they would be able to repel any Ustashi force sent against them. On the 6th September this was put to the test when their position was raided by the Ustashi. Fortunately they were not able to penetrate beyond the outer patrols.

On the 16th September the patrol was re-supplied by air, bringing food, clothing and ammunition. Also included in the air drop was a 3-inch Mortar for use by the partisans. The following morning the food was hidden in the hills, whilst the clothing comprising predominately of Battle Dress and boots was distributed amongst the men. Later on the partisans, armed with their new mortar attacked a garrison of Germans at Korkorici, inflicting heavy casualties.

On the evening of the 18th, the patrol was receiving reports about enemy movements in the area, and from the intelligence gained were able to identify suitable targets in Herzegovina which were subsequently bombed by the RAF.

On the 26th, the patrol made its way to Radonici walking all through the night and arriving the next morning. By the 28th the patrol had arrived at Drazevitici, where they were met by Kommandant Tolic Drinko, who suggested that the patrol should accompany him to Trklye.

The last week of September saw the patrol continually on the move to avoid detection and shelling by the enemy. Eventually the patrol arrived at Baranovac where they enjoyed their first meal for several days. Reports were being received that enemy ground forces were pushing forward towards the patrol's position. Consequently they were forced to move again, reaching the village of Trnova on the 1st October.

It was here that Ken Smith found that the radio was no longer working, and this was attributed to damage sustained during the heavy shelling over the last few days. Archie Gibson decided that he would return to Vis with Ken Smith to get the radio repaired. Consequently Archie and Ken set off leaving Sgt. Gilbert Jetley in charge of the patrol.

Early on the 3rd, the patrol learned that they were surrounded by the enemy and would have to move immediately. They would not be able to take their packs, but only arms and ammunition. After hastily hiding the equipment that was to be left behind amongst the rocks, the patrol together with the partisans moved up into the hills east of Trnova. There the patrol moved into the woods and laid hidden for the rest of the day. At dusk the patrol started out for a partisan headquarters at Brikva, and a little while later their previous hiding place came under artillery fire. At 1am of the following morning the patrol reached Tilovina where they were able to snatch a few hours sleep. By 5am they were on the move again, moving up into the hills where they remained hidden for the day.

On the 5th the patrol finally arrived at Brkva where they attempted to contact LRDG Headquarters on a partisan radio, but with no success. However, they did receive a message broadcast from their Advanced HQ with orders to return immediately. At 17:00 hours the patrol left the partisan HQ and made its way to the coast to await the boat that would take them back to Vis. However, they were not the only ones waiting to be picked up. About one hundred Italian POW's were waiting for the same boat, and when in the early hours of the 7th, it still had not arrived, the patrol went back up into the hills to a village called Donje Kuce. Here they spent the rest of the night and the whole of the next day, being fed by the villagers.

In the evening the patrol returned to the coast where at 22:00 hours they were picked up, together with the Italians, by a supply vessel escorted by a partisan gun boat. The patrol was initially taken to Jelsa on the island of Hvar where they were transferred on to the gunboat. The patrol finally reached Vis at 06:00 hours on the 8th October 1944, where they were reunited with Capt. Gibson.

It was not long after Y2 Patrol's return from Croatia, that it was despatched on yet another operation. This time the patrol together with members of Y1 was to take over shipping on the island of Ist.

Accordingly, the patrol consisting of an officer, eight troopers, a signalman and a medical orderly, embarked in a trawler near Manfredonia in Italy on 14th November 1944. The patrol was accompanied by an additional patrol member who is not mentioned in the official accounts – a dog with the extraordinary appellation of 'Bubalaty'.

After an overnight stay at Komiza, on the western coast of Vis, the patrol left in the early hours of the following morning. Unfortunately the vessel ran aground and it was only when the MV La Palma, under Capt. Denniff, arrived on the 17th that the patrol was able to proceed to Ist. Gibson and his men eventually arrived on Ist late on the 18th amidst considerable excitement arising from the reported sighting of numerous two-men submarines off the island of Cherso.

The patrol were billeted in three houses on the island. Half a dozen men occupied the first floor of a house located approximately 400 yards from the jetty, whilst the

ground floor was occupied by the owner, a woman and her five children. Three men lived in the house next door where one room housed the radio. A third house, about 200 yards from the first, and occupied by a midwife, served as a 'sick-bay'.

Throughout the remainder of November and early December, little activity is recorded in the patrol log. On 24th November Sharpshooter Gilbert Jetley paid a visit to Silba after an enemy raid which had resulted in the destruction of several houses and small boats.

On the 26th December Capt. Gibson was taken ill, and over the next few days his condition worsened to such an extent, that on the 31st he was evacuated to Zara. By this time Gilbert Jetley was also taken ill with malaria and was moved to the sick bay attended by Private Metcalfe. On the first day of 1945, orders were received that Sgt. 'Titch' Cave was to take command of the patrol.

On the 5th January, the patrol was asked to assist in the recovery of bodies after a naval motor launch was sunk in the vicinity of Molat with the loss of all hands.

On the 9th of January a message was received that alerted the patrol to a possible enemy raid. Nothing untoward happened that day nor indeed during daylight hours on the 10th. However, after nightfall events took a turn for the worse.

According to the patrol report, Sgt Cave in the main LRDG accommodation was about to retire at about 9.15pm when he heard the sound of three shots being fired. He initially thought that one of the LRDG launches had entered the harbour. He stepped outside and seeing nothing returned inside. A few moments later he heard another three shots. Jock Watson entered the house and informed 'Titch' Cave that there was a 'time-bomb' outside the radio room door.

Watson and Cyril Smith had been asleep in the house with the radio together with Ken Smith when something disturbed them. Jock Watson went to the front door and as he opened it he heard something clank behind it. He saw it was two large time bombs which were ticking. There was a booster of extra explosive alongside in a canister.

According to the patrol report, Watson returned with Wooller and they woke up Ken Smith, who dressed quickly and together with Cyril Smith picked up parts of the radio for which each was responsible, and made for the open air.

This differs somewhat from other accounts which state that after hearing shots, Ken Smith dashed outside to investigate. It is likely that these shots would have been the same shots heard by 'Titch' Cave. On his return the signalman had discovered the presence of a bomb. Whatever the truth, Ken Smith's actions were instinctive.

Although his primary duty was to safeguard the radio equipment, he remembered that the family were asleep in a backroom, and his patrol mates were close by. He immediately picked up the bomb that he had seen next to the radio, and made for a piece of waste ground between the house and the village church.

By this time Sgt Cave had dressed and was making his way down the stairs next door with Trooper Taylor. As he reached the bottom of the stairs, there was a terrific explosion, and both he and Taylor were blown off their feet. They picked themselves up and proceeded to the radio room. At this point Wooller who had received thirty-seven wounds from fragments was being carried out by Trooper Buckwald. A partisan guard was lying on the ground and he was carried out by Cave assisted by Taylor.

Kent Yeoman, Cyril Smith was dispatched to fetch the men from the sick-bay whilst Watson and Taylor were sent to retrieve the radio as well as locate Ken Smith. Meanwhile the woman and her children, who had been unharmed by the explosion, were removed to another building. A short while later Watson and Taylor returned with the radio and ciphers, but reported they were unable to find Ken Smith.

It transpired that a partisan has been seen to throw one bomb outside whilst Ken Smith had picked up another. He had got about five yards outside before it exploded in his hands. He did not stand a chance and had been killed instantly.

Sgt Cave decided to telegraph the Navy for help while Watson and Taylor went in search of further bombs. They soon found one outside the building in which the wounded Wooller had been placed. A shout went up and this building was evacuated leaving Wooller behind. Watson, noticing this, immediately ran inside and brought Wooller out.

Sgt Jetley moved the remainder of the men to Partisan HQ. Just before midnight another bomb exploded in the Partisan bath-house causing one casualty. Over the next half hour or so, a further three bombs exploded, destroying the main LRDG accommodation, and the Partisan ration and ammunition dumps.

When daylight came, Sgt Jetley arranged for Wooller and Watson, the latter suffering from shock, to be taken to Zara by a Partisan boat. It appears that Cyril Smith had also received a back wound in the explosion. It is thought that he failed to report this because of his fear of being cast out of the LRDG. In any case he was not recorded as a casualty at the time.

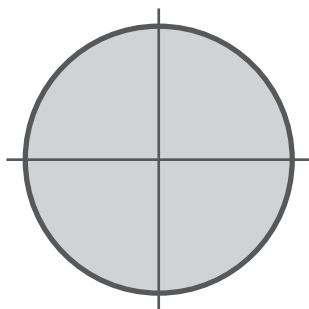
After the radio was set up a message was sent to HQ who advised that they would send the MV Kufra to pick them up. Finally the patrol was taken off the island of Ist at 13:45 hours. Ken Smith was subsequently awarded a posthumous George Cross.

By the time that Y patrol was extracted from Ist, the campaign in Yugoslavia, and the LRDG's role in it, was drawing to a close. Until the Allied Armies had reached the north of Italy, there was use in sending patrols into northern Yugoslavia or southern Austria. Furthermore, there were insufficient tasks to keep both LRDG squadrons fully employed.

Consequently, whilst A Squadron remained committed to operations along the Dalmation coast, in mid-February 1945, it was decided to send B Squadron to Terminillo and then Gran Sasso in Italy, for training with the Mountain Warfare School. The LRDG were to carry out training for a possible assault on Hitler's Alpine fortress in Southern Germany.

However, the hopes of B Squadron of taking part in Alpine operations did not come to pass. The war in Italy was nearly over, and it became obvious that their services would not be required. Reluctantly, they were brought back to LRDG headquarters at Rodi.

Once the war in Europe came to a close in May 1945, Lloyd-Owen realised that if the LRDG was not to be used in the fight against Japan, then it was likely that the unit would be disbanded. His hopes were raised in mid-June by a communication from War Office that indicated the LRDG were to return home before being deployed to the Far-East, only for his hopes to be dashed less than a week later by a signal saying the LRDG were to be disbanded.



GENERAL
JEAN VICTOR ALLARD
CC, CBE, DSO, ED, CD
A Canadian with the
Sharpshooters 1940-41

What is the highest rank achieved by somebody who served with the Sharpshooters? One strong candidate must be the Canadian General Jean Allard, who served with *4CLY* from September 1940 to March 1941. Allard's distinguished career culminated as Canada's Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). He was the first French Canadian to hold this office, during which he oversaw the unification of Canada's Armed Forces.

Jean Victor Allard was born in St Monique de Nicolet in Quebec province, on 12 June 1913 and, on leaving school, joined the insurance company of Rousseau et Frères Ltd. Independent-minded, in 1933 he joined the militia (Canada's TA) in his home city of Trois-Rivières, and remained in it throughout the Depression, despite its low status and English-speaking bias.

On the outbreak of war Allard, as a major, requested a transfer to the Active Force. Canada's army was tiny, and lacking experience and equipment, with as few as 15



outdated machine gun carriers as its armoured force. Mobilisation proceeded piecemeal and Allard and his fellows soon found their French-speaking unit was brought up to strength with English speakers, leading to a policy of speaking English and French on alternate days so every everybody a chance to develop their skills. Even so the *Régiment des Trois-Rivières* was an increasingly English-speaking unit as the war continued. Allard was then sent to Canada's staff college at Kingston for a refresher course before being selected to go to the UK for further training in armoured warfare. He arrived soon after Dunkirk and after training as a gunner and in tactics at Bulford, was attached to

the 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters), joining Major George Kitson's C Squadron.

Allard describes his part thus: *"My role in the defence of England was to serve with C squadron of the 4th County of London Yeomanry. Here again, we had only light tanks. Our heaviest equipment consisted of one Besa machine gun. The regiment, composed of recruits from London and the surrounding area, was proud and spirited. It included lawyers, notaries and veterans from 1914-18, come to serve the King. In general they had no desire for command, preferring to leave this role to the regulars."*

The regiment was part of 22nd Armoured Brigade in the 1st Armoured Division whose role was to defend the south-eastern coast of England. It was assigned an area between Rye and Folkestone, almost directly opposite Dunkirk and in the front line in the event of a German landing. Allowing three tanks for SHQ, C Squadron had only nine to cover a front of 12 miles. Allard recalled how General Norrie, the division's commander, ordered his forces to drive across as many fields as they could in order to deceive German reconnaissance aircraft as to the strength of the British force. *"So out we went into the fields, to the dismay of the farmers, who had to be satisfied with my explanation – 'It's alright.' My English was still rather shaky at the time!"* Allard, however, like other 4CLY writing of the period, records that they did as little damage as possible.

Allard wrote warmly and admiringly of his time with 4CLY, describing them as *"...reserved; sometimes they seemed almost shy. Once you got to know them, however, they were friendly and enormously funny. At work, they were serious. At play they were aggressive, staunch defenders of what, in cricket, they described as 'fair play'; they were formidable opponents."* Allard's service coincided with the Blitz and he described how *"The ruling people we French Canadians have frequently known only through our local anti-British propaganda became a people to be admired"* commenting how the Londoners attended concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, even when the performance was sure to be interrupted by fire from the anti-aircraft batteries in nearby Hyde Park.

In early 1941 4CLY was ordered to North Africa and Allard's time with the regiment was over. On his return to Canada he was appointed 2iC of his old regiment and put in charge of training it for an armoured role. Rather than just a small cadre of instructors he used his experience with the Sharpshooters in England to develop a programme using the whole unit as a school, meaning that it was soon equal to any other Canadian armoured regiment.

In mid 1941 the *Trois-Rivières* was ordered to prepare for service in Europe but Allard was selected, instead, to attend the first course to be run at the new Canadian Army Staff College in Kingston. Allard commented proudly in his autobiography that this was another milestone in the Canadian Army's independence from the British and how the course set the scene for its expansion in a couple of years into the First Canadian Army which consisted of two corps.

He now joined the 5th Canadian Armoured Division as it moved to the UK in November 1941. Here his previous experience, both of working with the British Army and of the equipment, proved very useful. Building on lessons being learned in North Africa, including 4CLY's heavy losses at the Battle of Agedabia in January 1942, Allard invented an electrical system which ensured that the main gun would automatically come into line with the commander's periscope, saving vital seconds in an engagement.



In tests at Lulworth a crew of recruits using the new equipment easily beat one of instructors without. The invention was also widely demonstrated, including to General de Gaulle, who was surprised to be briefed in French.

In July 1942 he returned to Canada as an instructor at the Staff College, before returning to England to join the staff of the new 1 Canadian Corps, then based in and around East Grinstead. Here he learned that, despite his experience and performance to date, he had been sidelined and that command of the *Trois-Rivières* had been given to an English-speaker with no previous links to the Regiment. Insulted professionally, and aggrieved at his Regiment's increasingly Anglophone profile, Allard complained to his Corps Commander and was offered a transfer to a French-speaking infantry unit. Posted initially to the *Régiment de la Chaudière*, he then transferred to the *Royal 22e Régiment (R22eR)*, joining it as 2iC in Sicily in August 1943.

The *R22eR*, also known as the “Van Doos”, was created as a Francophone battalion of the *Canadian Army* in 1914 at a time when attempts to forbid teaching in French, or of French, in the school system (Regulation 17), caused outrage in French Canada and a lack of support for the war of the “King and Country” that was perceived as seeking to destroy the Francophone community in Canada. Considerable political pressure in Quebec, along with public rallies, demanded the creation of French-speaking units to fight a war that many viewed as being right and necessary. Throughout his career Allard was keenly aware of being in a minority, both as a French speaker in a predominantly English-speaking army, and as a member of Canada's Francophone community, many of whom did not support a war which they saw as being declared by an English-speaking government which did not serve their interests. As he grew in seniority he would try to remedy this.

In September 1943 the *R22eR* landed in Italy and saw several months heavy fighting in often miserable conditions as the allied forces fought their way up the peninsula through successive lines of German defences. In December 1943, while temporarily in command, Major Allard was awarded the DSO for the courage, initiative and skill which he displayed during the Battle of Arielli, near Ortona. He was wounded shortly afterwards. In January 1944, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and appointed Commanding Officer. That September his outstanding service during the breakthrough of the Gothic Line earned him a first bar to his DSO. In March 1945 he was promoted to brigadier and took command of the *6th Canadian Infantry Brigade* in the Netherlands, where his leadership, particularly during the advance to Groningen, earned him a second bar to his DSO.

After the war Brigadier Allard returned to Canada, before being appointed Military Attaché in Moscow in November 1945, serving there until 1948, and seeing the onset of the Cold War at first hand. Allard's instructions from Ottawa forbade “spying” but he learned to make use of the local media and chatting to servicemen he met in the street to find out what was going on and that his Canadian winter uniform and accent meant that on occasion Russians mistook him for an officer from the further reaches of the USSR, and gave him access to the shop selling classified military manuals.

He then served in staff and command appointments in Canada and attended the Imperial Defence College (Now the Royal College for Defence Studies) in London, before being appointed Commander of the *25th Canadian Infantry Brigade* in Korea,

and representing Canada at the truce-signing ceremonies at Panmunjom in July 1953. After further service in Canada he was promoted to Major General in April 1958 and became Vice Chief of the General Staff. In November 1961 he was appointed GOC of *4th Division* in the British Army of the Rhine, the first Canadian to hold the post. At the time *4th Division* consisted of the British *20th Armoured Brigade*, the Canadian *4th Infantry Brigade* and the *4th Guards Brigade*. Allard's unprecedented appointment seems to have been the result of a mix of esteem for Allard himself, built during his service in Italy and Korea, combined with a desire to bind Canada more closely into NATO and to ensure it maintained ground forces in Europe.

Allard's ability, willingness to lead by example, and concern for his soldiers made him a natural choice for the highest ranks in the Canadian forces, especially when moves to integrate and then unify the *Canadian Armed Forces* began. First he became a Lieutenant General, the highest rank thus held by a French-Canadian soldier, and was put in charge of *Mobile Command*, which contained Canada's ground forces. Then in 1966, with senior officers resigning en masse as unification and the elimination of service uniforms and traditions loomed, the defence minister, Paul Hellyer, offered to promote him to general and CDS.

Shrewd as ever, Allard accepted but with some conditions, including that the changes also removed all barriers to the advancement of Francophones in the forces, including the establishment of French language units. Hellyer gulped but agreed and the establishment of French language fighter squadrons, ships, armoured and artillery regiments went ahead. It could be argued that this laid the ground for the armed forces of an independent Quebec, although this was never his intention. Indeed, as shown above Allard could be very anglophile and argued in his autobiography that Canada would only survive as a single country if it could make its francophone members feel part of the whole. He was also far from an unquestioning Francophile: when President de Gaulle called for an independent Quebec during a visit to Canada, Allard, then CDS, quietly replaced all the French-language guards of honour with English-speaking units for the rest of the trip.

General Allard died, after a long illness, on 22 April 1996.

Sources and acknowledgements

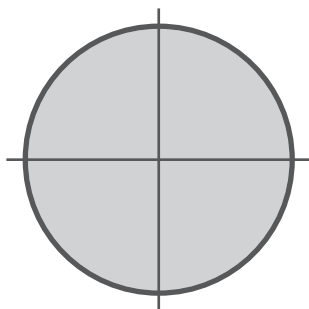
Rawlinson, H. Graham and J.L. Granatstein, *The Canadian 100: the 100 most influential Canadians of the 20th century*, Toronto: McArthur and Co., 1997.

General Allard's official biography, supplied by RHQ the *R22eR*.

The Memoirs of General Jean V Allard, with Serge Bernier. University of British Columbia Press, 1988.

General Allard's obituary, *Daily Telegraph*, April 1996.

All photo credits: "*RHQ, R22eR*".



THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY RESERVE – THE VIEW FROM ‘DOWN UNDER’

by David Fisher

Recently, while listening to the BBC World Service, I heard one of the UK Defence Ministers outline the change of name of the Territorial Army to Army Reserve and with that an increasing dependence on TA/Reserve soldiers. Part of the argument seemed to be that the UK was out of balance with the ratio of Regulars to Territorials with “our allies and partners around the world”. A direct comparison with the US, Canada and Australia was made.

So, how does Australia use its Army Reservists? Broadly speaking, the Australian Army consists of the 1st and 2nd Divisions with a number of training establishments and HQ’s lurking around. The 1st Div is made up of Regular units and the 2nd Div of Reserve Regiments and Battalions. Regular units of the 1st Div have been very busy since 1999 in East Timor, Iraq, Border Protection duties and Afghanistan.

Because of this heavy Regular commitment, the Army Reserve soldiers of the 2nd Div have been used in East Timor, the Solomon Islands and for several HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) Operations in mainland Australia and in SE Asia. In East Timor Leste (OP ASTUTE) there is a company sized group of reservists and in the Solomon Islands (OP ANODE) there is again a company plus of reservists and HQ. Both of these are UN peacekeeping and support to fledgling Government operations.

Two recent examples of HADR operations have included the Victorian bushfires of 2009 (800 soldiers in prolonged call out) and Operation Queensland Flood Assist 2011 (where 1900 soldiers were on prolonged call out). In both these operations the Army Reserve followed a three phase process:

- Reaction to the emergency (containment of the situation)
- Immediate community support (recovery phase)
- Transition phase (handing back to civilian agencies)

In both these HADR operations it was generally not necessary to call up a reservist into full time service. Soldiers were paid and supplied through the MTD budget. In the case of Queensland Flood Assist, a significant number of the reservists worked for a six-week period as the normal emergency services and civilian volunteers could not cope with the scale of the disaster.

It would be fair to say that the increased use of Army Reserve soldiers over the last 12 years has been popular within the Australian community as well as within The



Flood assistance.



Bushfires in Victoria.

Australian Army. It is seen as value for money for maintaining and training a Division's worth of soldiers and has also allowed a narrowing of the perceived gap between the Regulars and Reservists.

But in the future we must be even more integrated and efficient with our defence dollars. That is where PLAN BEERSHEBA comes in.

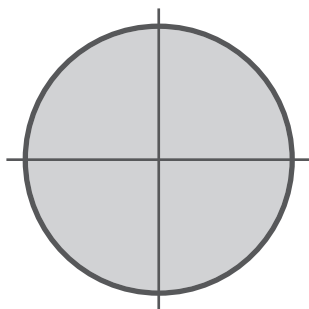
Plan BEERSHEBA involves the development of Multi-role Combat Brigades, based on the Regular 1, 3 and 7 Brigades. These Brigades will develop common structures containing all elements of the combined arms team (essentially permanent Battle grouping). The Reserve 2nd Div will support these regular Brigades, providing additional capacity for each from a Reserve Brigade. Plan BEERSHEBA demands a greater operational capability from the Reserve and, for the first time, the 2nd Div will be closely aligned with the Army Force Generation Cycle and will be responsible for defined capability outputs in direct support of the "Ready" forces.

This could mean, for example, that if 11 Bde (2nd Div) was aligned with 3 Bde while it was on "ready" then it may have to provide several sub-units to flesh out 3 Bde in time of crisis or emergency.

However an anomaly still remains. Under PLAN BEERSHEBA the ***"2nd Div warfighting" focus will remain on stability operations and this task will provide the basis for the structure, training and equipping of the Reserve force***. Most reservists interpret this to mean that initial phases of war will be a regular only affair, with the reservist soldier's only coming in after several months and that reserve soldiers will (in the future) only be trained in stability and peacekeeping operations and lose any connection with conventional operations.

At the moment this is a hot topic of debate. The reserve soldiers have proved themselves as a competent (and somewhat cheaper) solution to the international obligations and internal disasters Australia has faced. The temptation is to think that he or she is only fitted for those two roles. If this thinking prevails over the next decade then some of the flexibility for which the reserve soldier is famous will be lost.

Major David Fisher (RAAC) is currently an instructor on the Grade 3 and Grade 2 Officer promotion courses in Australia. A few years back he was a Troop Leader and Sqn 2IC with the Sharpshooters and went on OPTELIC 4.



SHARPSHOOTERS SOUND AND VISION

“AGIUS COLLECTION”

Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association in partnership with The Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum Trust

Tim Rayson and David Hannam continue to seek willing volunteers who want to share on camera their individual memories of time with The Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry through the decades. We are now working on the 1950s, 60s and 70s and those that have served on active service in recent times, subject to agreement with our Squadrons.

It is a relaxed and friendly experience, with Tim and you sharing a quiet conversation, whilst in another corner of your lounge – we are happy to come to you or the Museum rooms at our TA Centres – David fiddles about with wires, microphones and a video camera. We like to think of it as “preserving the living history of today for tomorrow’s Sharpshooters”.

If you would like to discuss joining the growing band of Sharpshooters (40 plus) who have gone “on the record” then please get in touch with Tim who will be happy to make the arrangements.





**Kent and
Sharpshooters Yeomanry
“AGIUS Collection”**



DIGITAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PRICES - Jan to Dec 2013

With the help of the AGIUS Collection Sound and Vision team, we are delighted to offer a selection of digital items for viewing at your leisure on your choice of personal computer or digital eBook reader for the pdfs.

eBooks are pdfs available for download from DROPBOX only – details on how to do that will be provided following your purchase.

Cheques payable to: D Hannam

Send to: 21 Red Cedars Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 0BX

Payment via PayPal or wire transfer for all DVDs and ebook products is also available.

Contact David Hannam by email for details at thetigger@mac.com

Villers-Bocage: The Truth Behind The Myth

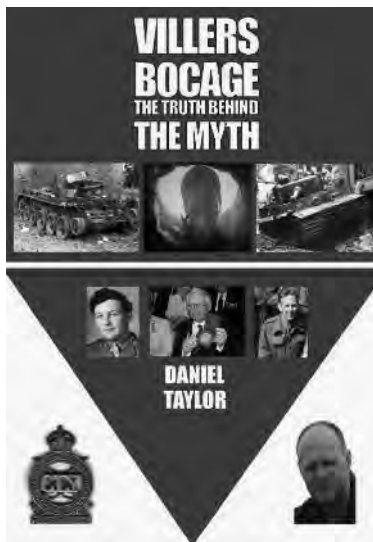
by Daniel Taylor

[DVD PAL Format 50 minutes]

Written and presented by Daniel Taylor the author, historian and expert on this famous battle that took place in the picturesque Normandy town of Villers-Bocage on 13th June 1944.

Daniel's 50minute (approx.) film includes never before seen eye-witness accounts from veterans of the battle from the 'Sharpshooters', the Rifle Brigade and the Royal Horse Artillery, plus local French testimony that provides new insight into the most significant tank action of the Normandy Campaign.

The DVD was originally produced by The Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association and is raising money for the current Association Welfare Fund from the sale proceeds.



Price: £10 including UK P & P

Before I Forget by Roy Cawston; pdf

First published in 1993, this celebrated volume has been out-of-print for many years and covers “some recollections of a Sharpshooter 1939-1946”. This is an updated edition by Roy.

Price: £10



Carpique Bound

by Walter Allen and Roy Cawston; pdf

First published as an A4 book in 1997 and no longer available in print. We are delighted to offer once again this pictorial tribute to 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) 1939-1944.

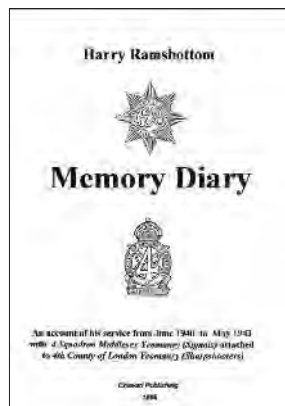
Price: £10



Memory Diary by Harry Ramsbottom; pdf (93pp)

Harry was with 4 Squadron Middlesex Yeomanry (Signals) and this is an account of his service (often in the CO's tank) from June 1940 to May 1943 covering el Gubi and Op Crusader, Knightsbridge box, Alam Halfa, El Alamein and the march to Tunisia whilst attached to 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters). In spirit Harry was a Sharpshooter and we remember him as such. Written in 1983 and first published in 1995 as a spiral bound A4 book.

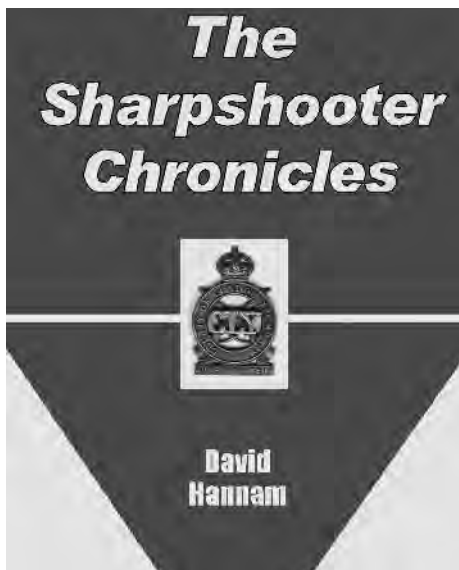
Price: £10



The Sharpshooter Chronicles by
David Hannam; pdf

David has painstakingly scanned in all
the available paper copies of the:

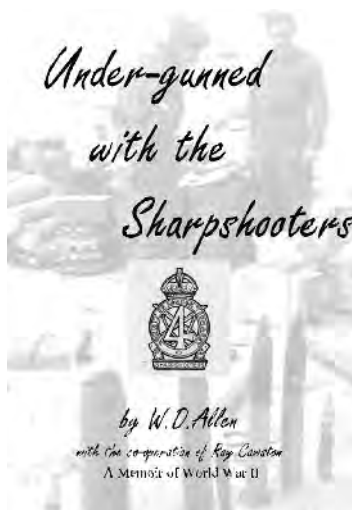
- Sharpshooters news issued by the
Hon Secretaries during WW2
- Sharpshooters Gazette an A5
magazine from the late 1940s and
1950s
- Association newsletters up to and
including this edition

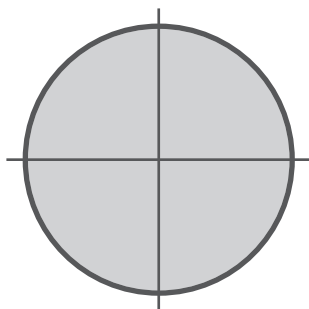


Undergunned with the Sharpshooters
by Walter Allen; pdf (60pp)

First published in 1997 as a spiral bound A4
book, Walter wrote this on the back of the
success of Carpiquet Bound having been
encouraged to “keep scribbling” by a number of
friends. It covers his time as a pre-War Territorial
from 1938 through to demob in early 1946.
Along the way, Walter was involved in all the
major actions of 4th County of London
Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) through to the
amalgamation at Carpiquet airfield.

Price: £10





KSYA FUND RAISING Wine List 2012

The Secretary is always looking for enjoyable ways of raising funds for the *Association* welfare fund and following previous exploits in the area of wines the idea of a new *Sharpshooter* Red and White was conceived. Utilising connections in the trade and following the success of 'Sandy's Salute' port the following wines are offered for a minimum donation of £7.00 per bottle.

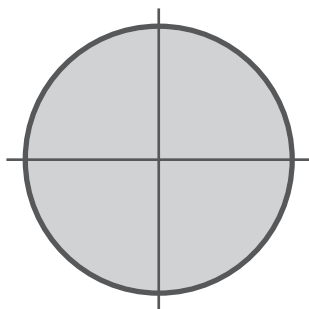
This venture is not funded by the *Association* in any way and what better way to support the *Association* and enjoy it as well. The *Association* benefits from the donations that you make and which will attract Gift Aid.

Sharpshooter White No 2 is a French Sauvignon Blanc with a clean dry taste and fruity finish. The label is one of a series of cartoons of 23rd London Armoured Car Company officers held at Croydon dating back to the mid 1920's.

Sharpshooter Red No 2 is a French Merlot with a touch of Grenache resulting in a smooth and silky wine. The label is a copy of a cartoon dating back to 1916 when the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles formed 10th (V)Bn The Buffs and were therefore 'extinguished' from the Army ORBAT.

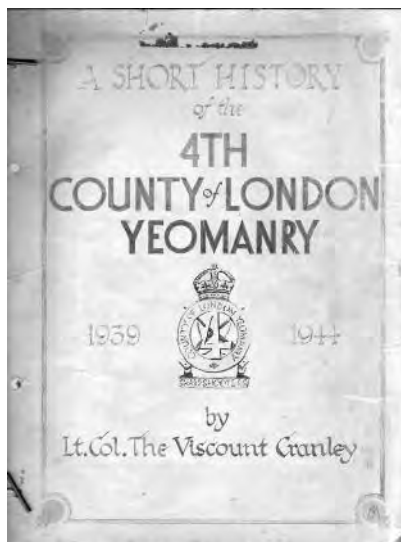
Please note that the **minimum order is one case (6 bottles) if you wish to collect from the Hon Secretary and for home delivery is a case of 12 bottles.** Both of these can be mixed in any proportion of Red/White or by single cases of red and white. If you are unable to purchase a full case for your own consumption then please consider joining with others to make up a case. Please note that home delivery attracts a delivery charge of £7.50p





BOOK REVIEWS

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE 4th COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY 1939-1944 by Lt. Col. The Viscount Cranley



This is a 26 page amended typescript with a preface signed by ‘Cranley Lieut. Colonel 4th C.L.Y’ and dated 7th March 1945.

The foreword states that ‘This book does not in any way pretend to be a complete history of the 4th C.L.Y. As the last Colonel of the Regiment before Amalgamation with its parent unit, I have tried, with other Officers, to produce from memory a short calendar of the most important events in the life of the Regiment as our memorial to all those who died fighting so gallantly in a regiment described by a very senior Officer to H.M. the King on his visit to Tripoli, as the finest Armoured Regiment in North Africa.’

Inside the front cover is a list headed ‘TO BE INCLUDED ON RETURN TO THE UNITED KINGDOM’ with six sub

headings including a ‘roll of honour’, ‘list of awards’ and a facsimile of Field Marshal Montgomery’s letter to The *Regiment* after Villers-Bocage announcing the decision to amalgamate the 3rd and 4th CLY.

The last paragraph of the book notes that ‘the foregoing pages’ were compiled by the author and friends while prisoners of war in Oflag 79 Germany. The names include Major Carr (Second in Command 4CLY), Captain Rose (Adjutant), Capt Brown (2ic A Sqn 4CLY) and eight subalterns including four from A Sqn, the Squadron ambushed at Point 213 outside Villers-Bocage by the Tiger tanks of Schwere SS-Panzer-Abteilung 101 (101st SS Heavy Panzer Battalion).

In 1961, Lord Onslow (as he now was) published *Men and Sand*, which at 130 pages is a much fuller account, having access to official accounts and more of his wartime colleagues. Both are very much written from his own experience. The 1961 version was obviously written with this typescript alongside as from time to time paragraphs from

the typescript are repeated, particularly at the start of some sequence of The Regiment's history.

It seems that contact with home was not entirely prohibited for a PoW. He appears to have been able to acquire a typewriter. The typescript also notes that 'The Author wrote to Lady Cranley from Oflag 79 requesting her to prepare for him the final pages, photographs, Roll of Honour, etc in order that he could complete this short history at the cessation of hostilities'.

On the last page of the typescript is a manuscript letter to 'Sandy', Lt-Col A. A. Cameron, who had been a close colleague throughout the war until he left *4CLY* to take over command of *3CLY* in Sicily in 1943. This letter is headed 'C' Squadron RAC OCTU Sandhurst' and is dated 6-6-45 indicating that Viscount Cranley was back on duty very soon after his release from captivity in Germany.

The Last Great Cavalryman



The book takes you on a journey of a true cavalryman through the Great War, life as an officer between the wars, and on to senior command in WWII. The book is a blend of insight into his career as a soldier interspersed with personal and family life and the consistent theme of his love of horses and success as a horseman. The author successfully manages to combine all these themes together bringing Sir Richard McCreery to life as an individual with a great intellect, a strong moral compass and a determination to win despite the odds.

The book covers his military career from life as a subaltern during the Great War, personal tragedy in Ireland between the wars and onto the world and perspective of a senior officer in WWII. It is the latter that gives a fresh insight of war at the operational (corps) level, with the curious blend of strong personalities, politics and cultural differences that were a feature of that time. Throughout it Sir Richard demonstrates his strong leadership skills and a determined personality. His is acknowledged as a military tactician at the operational level who successfully advised some of the better known personalities of WW2 such as General Eisenhower and Field Marshal Alexander of Tunis in how to succeed against the enemy. Sir Richard was an Honorary Colonel of the 3rd/4th County of London Yeomanry post World War 2.

The book is a great read and one I greatly enjoyed.

Penny Malik



SHARPSHOOTERS YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION FORECAST OF EVENTS 2013

April

- 20th St George's Day Dinner. Cost: £30pp excl drinks and cheese board. Further details available from Mark Kentfield on 07540 073203 (mark.kentfield@london-fire.gov.uk).
- 20th RY 'Iraq' Sport Day and Ball to be held in Oxford. Further details from SSM C Sqn or the Hon Secretary.

May

- 2nd – 6th Badminton Horse Trials.
- 12th Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association Parade and Service Hyde Park. Please contact the Hon Secretary in April for further details. There will be an All Ranks RY lunch afterwards. Venue and cost to be announced.

June

- 8th (TBC) Federation of London OCA Parade and Service Please contact the Hon Secretary in April for further details.
- 13th 69th Anniversary of the Battle of Villers Bocage
- 19th KSYA Trustees and Management Committee meeting.

July

- 10th 70th Anniversary of OP HUSKY - 3rd CLY Landing in Sicily
- 23rd ***Founders Day. 112th Anniversary of the 3rd CLY being gazetted in 1901.***

September

- 22nd 70th Anniversary of 3rd CLY landing in Italy at Taranto
70th Anniversary of 4th CLY landing at Salerno

October

- 20th Combined Cavalry Church Service and lunch RH Chelsea. Please contact the Hon Secretary in April for further details.

November

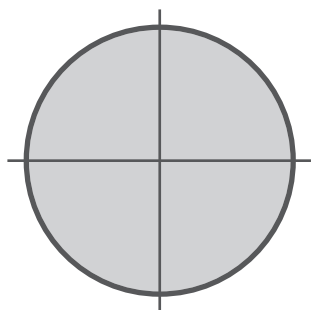
- 7th Opening of the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey and lunch. Please apply to the Hon Secretary for tickets in July.
- 9th Lord Mayors Show. KSYA and cadets man the SYA float.
- 10th Remembrance Sunday.
- 22nd All Ranks Bir El Gubi dinner. To be held at The Officers Mess, Regents Park Barracks, Albany Street. Please contact the Hon Secretary for further details in June.
- 24th 2 RGH Bir El Gubi service at Badminton. Please contact Dave Carter in October if you are going.
- 30th Ladies Night, C(KSY) Sqn. Please contact the Hon Secretary for further details in October.

December

- 1st **Inputs for the 2013 Journal are required by this date.**
- 12th (TBC) RY Carol Concert. Further details to be published.
- 31st ***114th Anniversary of the Founding of the Sharpshooters in 1899.***

January 2014

100th Anniversary of the start of World War 1 and the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Villers Bocage



LIST OF DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM KSYA MEMBERS IN RESPONSE TO THE APPEAL CARRIED IN THE 2011/12 EDITION

Paul Acda, Walter Allen, Mr Barber, Terry Bodman, Mrs Bloomfield, Gurth Bramall, Terry Burton, Tony Card, Les Colombe, Richard Cotton, Hal Currie, Vic Dickens, Norman Dives, Mr Dowsing, Mr Fernie, Mr Green, Cate Hawkins, Richard Hewitt, Mr Johnson, Andy Kelleher, Mr King, Mr Kirton, Mike Last, Robin Lawrence, J Lee, Tim Lawson-Cruttenden, Robin Ludlow, Richard McCreery, Boris Mollo, Ernest Oxley, Clifford Pace, Mr Perry, Chris Rae, Mr Ridgewell, Darren Ross-Dreher, Mr Sinker, Mr Spain, Edward Stancomb, Chris Sutton, Ben Tottenham, Geoff Vokes, Geoff Waldemeyer

If have donated and your name does not appear above please let the Hon Secretary know and your name will appear in the next edition of the Journal. If you want to get your name on the list for next year then all you have to do is to donate! Contact the Hon Secretary for details on how to support your Journal and your Association.

Field of Remembrance 2012





Royal Russell CCF Cadets on Cavalry Sunday.